SPORTS PINK
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Home of Hampshire sport
October 7 2017

Remembering the life of Alan Ball

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WHY WE MIGHT NEVER SEE THE LIKE OF RICKIE LAMBERT AGAIN

LAST OF THE LEGENDS?

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Williamson on target, but Eastleigh lose

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The best local non league coverage

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Review of the Hampshire 2017

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The World to play for ...

England failed to impress in their last outing but know they will be at the World Cup.

However, for Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, Scotland and Wales, the final round of group-stage qualifying is highly important.

Here, the Sports Pink looks at how things stand for each team.

ENGLAND

England qualified with a scrappy 1-0 victory over Slovenia at Wembley on Thursday night with an injury time winner from captain Harry Kane. They complete their Group F campaign away to Lithuania on Sunday.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Michael O'Neill's team cannot now qualify as Group C winners after losing to Germany on Thursday. They cannot drop below second though and must now hope to do enough away to Norway on Sunday to book a play-off place by avoiding being the worst of the nine second-place finishers. Saints midfielder Steven Davis is expected to win his 99th cap on Sunday.

REP OF IRELAND

The Republic - including Saints striker Shane Long - can in theory still win Group D but would need to beat Wales on Monday and hope

Gareth Bale

leaders Serbia, featuring Long's St Mary's mate Dusan Tadic, trip up badly against Georgia. Finishing second is a more realistic goal for Martin O'Neill's team, and victory in Cardiff on Monday is imperative.

SCOTLAND

Victory at home to Slovakia pushed Gordon Strachan's team into second in Group F but they almost certainly need to win again, away to Slovenia on Sunday, to stay there, with nearest rivals Slovakia finishing their campaign at home to group minnows Malta, who only have two points to their name. Scotland have not qualified for a World Cup finals since 1998.

WALES

Chris Coleman's men are on the scent of automatic qualification following their win over Georgia on Friday and Serbia's loss to Austria. Second-placed Wales sit one point behind Serbia heading into the final round of games. They are eyeing a favour from the team they have just beaten, as Georgia head to Belgrade on Monday.

Wales will again be without injured ex-Saint Gareth Bale when they face the Republic on Monday. Wales last qualified for a World Cup finals in 1958.

SAINTS

A great working

Adam **Leitch**

Could Rickie Lambert be the last Saints legend?

The prolific striker, who this week announced his retirement from professional football, is revered by Saints supporters.

He had the lot – a goalscorer extraordinaire, somebody who played with his heart, an amazing back story from the beetroot factory to the Premier League, and a personality that shone above it all.

Lambert was the archetypal working class hero.

None of the luxury of having come through the plush academy ranks of a big club to superstardom for him.

He spent time out of football, famously putting the lids on jars of beetroot before working his way back up the footballing pyramid, eventually landing at Saints in 2009 for what would prove to be a bargain fee of £1m.

Transformed

Alan Pardew wanted him, and transformed his career.

Lambert had always had a knack for scoring goals before he linked up with Pardew, but was equally as prolific with his lifestyle away from the pitch.

With Pardew's influence he knuckled down, and what happened over the next five years at St Mary's was to become the defining period of his career.

Lambert scored 117 times for Saints, and was virtually an ever present as the side rose through the divisions, out of League One and the Championship via the JPT win at Wembley and back into the Premier League.

Each step was a new milestone for him, and when he eventually played for England, and scored, it was a modern day footballing fairy tale, the likes of which only Jamie Vardy has been able to match in recent times.

That Lambert's name is mentioned in the same breath as the man whose number seven he wore on his back, the great Matthew Le Tissier, is testament to the size of his impact on the club.

Decline

When it came to pass that he was to leave as that side that rose through the leagues was broken up, it felt like the end of an era.

Lambert's career, as it turned out, had already peaked, and there followed a rather sorry to watch decline which has resulted in a period without a team, and, therefore, eventual retirement.

In an era of mega money, Lambert has no doubt done very well for himself financially, but he was the kind of guy for whom the cash seemed secondary. He was living his dream, and one he believed would never come true.

It felt like players of yesteryear, of Le Tissier, Benali, Paine, Channon, and the other legends of Saints, who played for love and with passion and desire.

It made him a hero and, more than that, a legend.

There is a lot of discussion at the moment as to whether football has become detached from the supporters whose ticket money and TV subscriptions ultimately feed the bandwagon.

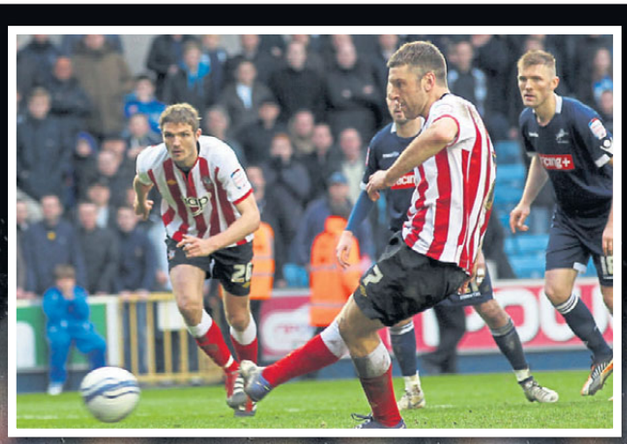
Back in the day, Le Tissier and Benali could not walk around in the centre of Southampton without getting stopped every couple of minutes by supporters. In fatc, the same is true now, even years after they hung up their boots. Lambert, who the supporters got to know in Saints' lower league days, had and has the same.

Take the current crop of players. They are better paid than ever before, their performances

SAINTS

class hero ...

Main pic - Rickie Lambert celebrates scoring at Fulham in 2012.
Right top - Lambert scores from the spot at Millwall in 2012, one of three goals that day.
Right middle - Lambert wheels away after scoring against Aston Villa in September 2012.
Right bottom - Lambert thumps home a penalty against Yeovil in September 2009.



are beamed around the world to a larger than ever audience, and yet many of them are largely anonymous. All but the most recognisable could walk through the centre of Southampton without getting noticed.

Nobody knows anything about them. They are hidden away.

They may have interesting things to say, interesting back stories, hobbies and families, but the chances are we will never be given the chance to find out.

Different era

They are instead hidden away from view, cosseted in the football bubble, and live a life that is total unfamiliar to the generic man on the terrace.

Lambert is just about of a different era, perhaps the last of an era with Saints now looking like a Premier League mainstay again.

It's why he was able to become a legend in the same way as some of the club's most illustrious names before him.

He might be the last one, at least for a long time.

Saints fans have their say on Rickie Lambert's retirement

On the Daily Echo's Saints Facebook page ...

Saints legend. My favourite ever footballer and all round nice guy apparently.
Happy retirement, big man. I'll tell my grandchildren about the memories you gave us.
One last time:
He stood just over 6ft3,
Rickie, Rickie.
He took us to the Premier League,
Rickie, Rickie.
He got the ball,
He took the ****.
He wore the shirt of Matt Le Tiss.
Rickie Lambert,
Southampton's goal machine.
Matt Hill

He needs to be our goalscoring coach ASAP - but respect to a true legend in lambert always in the red and white of the SFC.
Sam Bell

Fantastic player, hope he stays in the game!
Peter Veal

I feel he deserves a testimonial and Southampton should provide it.
Steven Groom

Such a shame as i bet he could of done it still in league 2 for a season but get him back to coach the players we have now, if that fails sign him up.
Michael Salter

A Saints super star. Will always have fond memories of his dedication to Saints success. Please come back to St. Mary's Rickie and educate the squad in scoring in the opposition's goal from the first whistle, not 10 minutes before the end when we are chasing a result.
Brian Dean

Well earned Rickie, come back to Saints and teach our lot what they are doing wrong, week after week. You are the most respected striker we've had since Le God.
Ray Green

What a legend #goalmachine such an underrated player great target man he will be missed, best of luck whatever he does in future, thanks for the great memories
Mikey Cooper

Unlike so many pro footballers, he always looked as though he enjoyed it! One of the best!!
Peter Berkeley

A legend in my opinion and will forever be a Saint.
Maureen Beesley

Still better than anyone we have atm
Mark Colborne

Such happy memories watching play for Saints. A great player and a good man, will always remember the letter he wrote to Saints fans when he left the club to join his childhood team Liverpool. Enjoy your retirement.
Tracey Smith

Best of luck for the future Rickie. Loved watching you play for Saints. Please come back as a goal scoring coach - you would be welcomed back with open arms.
Lin Burgess

Oh to have him back in his prime.... what a Saints legend.
Craig Rosamond

Thank you Rickie. You helped give Saints some of their best ever years.
Andrew Gregory

This is exactly the type of player we are missing right now.... Legend. Good luck Rickie.
Gary May

He would have had an even better career if Liverhampton hadn't ruined him!
Stephen Breeze

Sad to hear, should never have left Southampton.
Dave Hooper

Good luck and Enjoy whatever you do you have given everybody some good times so thanks.
Diane Hampton

On the Daily Echo website Saints page ...

Good Luck Rickie and thanks for the memories. Makes you wonder, would HE be that much better than our current crop, given the same service?
Iwozthere

Good luck Rickie on your retirement, it was a privilege and a pleasure to watch you play at our great club. All the best for your future and you never know you may come back to us in a coaching capacity. We certainly need someone to teach our current crop where the goal is!
kivetonsaint

Some of the current Prima-Donas could learn a lot from Sir Rickie. A true servant of the club he played for and an example to all who watched him play. VVD please note - you are a pale comparison.

Rickie Lambert

ChairmanGao

All the best Sir Rickie Lambert. A true gent and legend. I wish you'd never left.
summercat

Well if Crouch can score at 36, surely SRL can do a job, free kicks, penalties, come Les give him a call.
abbiscuits

Absolute diamond. My one football bet ever was a fiver on SRL scoring first and Saints winning 4-1 in the JPT final. All the best in everything you do.
isthereanyjam

Sir Rickie Lambert, the word 'legend' is used far to often, the word 'great' is used far to often, the word 'gentleman' is used far to often, but in this case all 3 words apply to Sir Rickie.
The amount of pleasure he gave to thousands of Saints fans over the years is insurmountable, here is one man, who along with Matt Le Tissier and Franny Benali, will never have to buy a pint ever again in a pub in Southampton!
Its just a shame other players, who couldn't lace his boots, didn't act with the same amount of dignity as he did on leaving, Lallana, Mane, Clyne, Lovren, Wanyama, Oxlade, and VVD in his excuse of a statement on reasons why he wanted to leave!!
Good luck in everything you do in the future, thanks for the memoriess
They Don't Like It Up 'Em

Dele given Becks warning

Dele Alli could repeat David Beckham's mistake of being sent off at a World Cup unless he heeds the warnings about his temperament.

That's the view of former Pompey and England midfielder Darren Anderton.

Alli is available for England's final qualifier against Lithuania on Sunday after missing Thursday's win over Slovenia through suspension.

The midfielder was handed a one-match ban by FIFA for making an offensive gesture against Slovakia last month.

The incident continued Alli's unfortunate knack of getting into trouble, with the 21-year-old already sitting out the first three games of Tottenham's Champions League campaign following a dangerous tackle made back in February.

Alli's talent is not in question. He is one of this country's deadliest attackers but the youngster reminds Anderton of Beckham and his red card in 1998, when 10-man England were beaten by Argentina in the World Cup's last 16.

"Becks was a special talent and he had that bit about him," said Southampton-born Anderton, who played 30 times for England.

"I remember Glenn Hoddle even warning Becks at Le Tournoi the year before. He got booked in a couple of games for something a bit petulant and Glenn said: 'if you do

Dele Alli

that next year it could cost us'.

"Now of course the next year it happened. I don't say it was down to Becks, it was down to poor refereeing and gamesmanship. But Dele needs to listen and be aware it can happen."

Alli is yet to hit top form for Spurs this season and it is possible he has been distracted by the controversy surrounding him.

"People should give him a bit of a break," said Anderton.

"He's only young. It's ridiculous what he's done already at his age and part of why he's done that is because he has that bit of devilment in him.

"At some point maybe you need to curb that but my argument would be when Wayne Rooney curbed his anger and temper he probably wasn't quite the same player."

Alli is one of five Tottenham players in the current England squad and it could become six if Danny Rose regains fitness.

With Kyle Walker also a likely starter, Anderton believes Gareth Southgate should build his side around a Spurs nucleus.

"When you look at what Spurs have, it's pretty special," Anderton said. "Why not try to build a team around that? I think back to when I played for England. At Euro 96, we had good players, leaders, but we also had a club mentality."

SAINTS

Rickie's amazing

Elliott **Binks**

SAINTS legend Rickie Lambert this week announced his retirement from professional football at the age of 35.

Here, the Sports Pink looks back at a remarkable career which was late to hit the heights but, when it did, provided Saints fans with memories they will never forget.

1999/00

Blackpool (3 games, 0 goals)

Lambert makes just three substitute appearances for third-tier Blackpool as they are relegated to the fourth tier. His professional debut comes in the season-opening 2-1 win over Wrexham, arriving as a second half sub.

Further substitute appearances follow in November 1999 and on the final day in May 2000.

2000/01

Macclesfield Town (9 games, 0 goals)

Released by Blackpool in November 2000, he eventually joins Macclesfield Town - also in the fourth-tier - the following March.

Of his nine appearances, five come from the bench.

2001/02

Macclesfield Town (35 games, 8 goals)

Breaks into the first team in mid-October and scores his first goals for the club in a 2-2 draw in an FA Cup tie against Forest Green in November.

A week later, gets off the mark in the league with a hat-trick against Luton at home, followed by a brace at Torquay the following week. He is just 19 at the time.

Doesn't score again until mid-February and only manages three more all season - but all come in games Macclesfield win by a single goal

This form leads to third-tier Stockport County spending £300,000 on him in April 2002.

2002/03

Stockport County (29 games, 2 goals)

Doesn't score his first Stockport goal until January 18, 2003—a consolation in a 5-2 home defeat by Swindon Town

Then kick-starts Stockport's comeback against former club Blackpool as they drew 2-2 having been 2-0 down

But they are his only goals of the season as Stockport stuttered to a 14th place finish.

2003/04

Magic memories - Rickie Lambert, main pic, celebrates promotion to the Premier League on the St Mary's pitch in April 2012. Right - Celebrating with the JPT at Wembley two years earlier.

Rickie Lambert, right, on his Liverpool debut against Saints at Anfield in August 2014.

Stockport County (40 games, 12 goals)

Gets off the mark against Blackpool in September, though his side lose 3-1.

Has only scored three league goals in 19 games by the New Year, and doesn't really hit his stride until netting seven goals in eight games through March and early April.

They include a winner against Sheffield Wednesday and a match-winning brace against Rushden & Diamonds.

2004/05

Stockport County (29 games, 4 goals), Rochdale (15 games, 6 goals)

Both Lambert and Stockport struggle - County eventually finishing bottom of League 1 as Lambert scores just four league goals.

With five yellow cards in the league, he was actually booked more often than he scored.

Joins League 2 club Rochdale for an undisclosed fee on February 17 - the day after his 23rd birthday.

Four goals in his first six games suggests a change of fortunes and helps his new team secure nine points within the first four weeks of his arrival.

2005/06

Rochdale (46 games, 22 goals)

Easily Lambert's most prolific season yet. He not only plays every league game, he also helps himself to 22 goals - making him joint-top scorer in the division

He nets braces against Leyton Orient, Torquay, Notts County, Shrewsbury and Northampton and develops a knack for late levellers - five equalisers in the final ten minutes of games v Chester, Cheltenham, Grimsby, Notts County and Lincoln.

SAINTS

footballing life

2006/07

Rochdale (3 games, 0 goals), Bristol Rovers (36 games, 8 goals)

Signs for Bristol Rovers for £200,000 after just three games of the new season.

Doesn't register for his new club until his ninth league game, opening his account against Barnet.

Scores just three in 26 games by mid-February before goals against Bury (2), Swindon and Hartlepool

Rovers win their final six games to earn a sixth-place finish - during which Lambert scores three goals - and win promotion via the play-offs

Lambert scores in the semi-final against Lincoln.

That is not his only semi final goal of the season, though. He also scores Rovers' JPT Southern Area final second leg winner - against none other than cross-city rivals Bristol City. In an instant, he is assured of legendary status among Gas fans.

2007/08

Bristol Rovers (46 games, 13 goals)

Highlights include a brace in a 2-1 win over Luton and winners against Walsall, Northampton and Port Vale - the latter via an 87th minute penalty

Lambert also scores six goals in eight FA Cup ties as League 1 Rovers make it to the quarter-finals. Along the way, Lambert scores the fifth round winner against Saints on his 26th birthday.

2008/09

Bristol Rovers (45 games, 29 goals)

His best season to date as he finishes as the division's top scorer.

Four goals in the 4-2 win over Southend in October saw him move onto 15 goals from his first 14 league games, and he added another hat-trick in the 3-0 win at Hereford the following March.

2009/10

Bristol Rovers (1 game, 1 goal), Saints (45 games, 30 goals)

After just one game of the new League 1 season, Lambert signs for newly-relegated Saints for £1m.

He nets on his debut - a League Cup win over Northampton - and also on his league debut, in a 3-1 loss to Huddersfield

Lambert rarely stops scoring after that - two goals as Saints claim their first league win against Yeovil, a second-half hat-trick at MK Dons, and two more on his return to the Memorial Stadium in a 5-1 romp against Rovers.

Two goals on the final day against Southend saw him finish with 30 in the league for Saints, and he wins the third tier Golden Boot for the second year running.

Continued on page 6

King out of Irish finale

Bournemouth striker Joshua King will miss Norway's final World Cup qualifier against Northern Ireland due to a hamstring injury.

King scored twice in his country's 8-0 win over San Marino on Thursday but came off around the hour-mark and has now confirmed he will not be risked for Sunday's encounter with Northern Ireland in Oslo.

The 25-year-old has netted five times in these qualifiers, more than any other Norwegian or Northern Irish player, but Lars Lagerback's side already know there is no chance of them qualifying.

"I felt my hamstring during the game (on Thursday) and in view of my history, we do not take any chances," King said.

"Myself, Lars and the medical team have discussed and agreed that I'm going home to get back (to fitness) as early as possible."

Ex-Hearts striker Bjorn Johnsen, who scored six goals in 37 appearances at Tynecastle, has been called up to replace King.

King finished last season as Cherries' top scorer with 16 league goals in 36 appearances - a vast improvement on his first season at the club in 2015/16 when he only struck six times in 31 outings.

He has scored just once in seven league games in 2017/18 - in a 2-1 loss at Everton. King also netted Cherries' League Cup winner against Brighton.

Joshua King

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'These are the games you want to be involved in - Coleman

Chris Coleman has embraced the pressure as Wales remain in the race for automatic 2018 World Cup qualification.

Wales' 1-0 win in Georgia on Friday was their third-successive victory and came as a serious boost to their play-off prospects.

But Group D leaders Serbia's last-gasp 3-2 defeat in Austria a few hours later means Wales can still win the group - and qualify automatically for the finals in Russia next summer.

For that to happen, Wales would have to overcome the Republic of Ireland in Cardiff on Monday night and the Serbs fail to win at home to Georgia.

Even if Serbia do win, Wales would probably guarantee themselves a play-off spot next month by beating the Republic, while a draw might also be enough as they look to reach the finals for the first time since 1958.

The Republic kept alive their hopes of finishing second by beating Moldova 2-0 in Dublin on Friday with two early goals from Daryl Murphy.

But after seeing Tom Lawrence come up with a superb second-half

Chris Coleman

winner in Tbilisi, Wales boss Coleman focused on the Republic game and said: "We're on dangerous ground if we go in with a game plan of trying to soak the pressure up for 90 minutes.

"We are too good to do that. We'll go and attack, go and score goals, we have to do that - it's our strength.

"A point may be OK, but we'll go for three. That's the way it's set up.

"It will be a sensational atmosphere in Cardiff and these are the games you want to be involved in."

Wales' win was achieved without star man Gareth Bale - the first time they had done so in 11 games when the Real Madrid forward has been missing.

The ex-Saints starlet will be absent again for the Cardiff finale and Wales hope he will be fit in time if they are involved in the play-offs.

"The last four years have not just been about Gareth," Coleman said.

"He's super important to us but we haven't had him, Joe Allen and Aaron Ramsey a lot of the time.

"Only three times since Belgium (when Wales won 3-1 in the quarter-finals of Euro 2016) have we had them all on the pitch.

"But we have a job to do, our team just get on with it and try and get over the line."

SAINTS

Beetroot boy to an

From page 5

Lambert also becomes the first Saint to score at the new Wembley stadium, converting a penalty in a 4-1 JPT final romp against Carlisle in front of 50,000 Saints supporters.

2010/11

Saints (45 games, 21 goals)

A slightly less productive season for Lambert, though he is still the club's leading marksman as they win promotion to the Championship.

Again scores at the Memorial Stadium in a 4-0 win at Bristol Rovers - the last game Alan Pardew takes charge of - and two penalties give Saints a 2-0 derby win over Cherries a few weeks later.

2011/12

Saints (42 games, 27 goals)

In his first ever season outside the bottom two divisions, Lambert silences any doubters by blasting 27 league goals as Saints clinched back to back promotions.

Scores four hat-tricks over the course of the campaign - v Nottingham Forest (3-2, home), Brighton (3-0, home), Watford (3-0, away) and Millwall (3-2, away).

His only blemish was the first red card of his professional career, at Brighton on January 2.

2012/13

Saints (38 games, 15 goals)

Continues his knack of stepping it up a level in a new division with 15 Premier League goals in his debut season in the top-flight

That makes him the joint-top scoring Englishman alongside Chelsea's Frank Lampard.

Though he surprisingly starts on the bench, Lambert comes on to score on his Premier League debut in a 3-2 loss at defending champions Manchester City.

Scores a stunning free-kick winner against reigning European champions Chelsea at St Mary's in March.

2013/14

Saints (37 games, 13 goals)

Begins the campaign with a fairytale senior England debut, scoring with his very first touch in international football during a 3-2 friendly win over Scotland at Wembley, having come on in the 67th minute for Wayne Rooney.

A few days later he converts a last minute penalty as Saints begin the new league season with victory at West Bromwich Albion.

Jay Rodriguez finishes as Saints' top scorer, but Lambert leads the way with 10 league assists to go with his 13 strikes - no-one had a hand in more goals than that.

Rickie Lambert celebrates another goal for Saints.

Ends the season at the 2014 World Cup, where he features as a late substitute in the 2-1 defeat to Uruguay.

2014/15

Liverpool (25 games, 2 goals)

By the time he had travelled to the World Cup, Lambert had joined boyhood club Liverpool, signing a two-year deal worth £4 million.

But he is only to spend one season at Anfield, with 18 of his 25 league appearances coming off the bench.

His two league goals are both scored away from Anfield - at Crystal Palace in November and Aston Villa in January.

Lambert also scores in the Champions League group stages, against Ludogorets.

2015/16

West Bromwich Albion (19 games, 1 goal)

With Liverpool recruiting Danny Ings and Christian Benteke, Lambert is sold to West Brom on a two-year deal for around £3million.

Sadly for him, he cannot reproduce the stunning form he showed for Saints.

He only nets once for the Baggies - a penalty against Leicester that is his 35th successful spot-kick conversion of his career.

This time, 14 of his 19 league ap-

SAINTS

England hero

Fairytale - Lambert heads the winner with his first touch in an England shirt in August 2013.

Main pic - Rickie Lambert puts Saints ahead in the JPT final against Carlisle in 2010. Right - Lambert hits a stunning free kick against Stoke at St Mary's.

pearances come as a substitute

2016/17

West Bromwich Albion (1 game, 0 goals), Cardiff City (18 games, 4 goals)

After one sub appearance for the Baggies, Lambert joins Cardiff on a two-year contract for an undisclosed fee on transfer deadline day

He makes his debut in the 3-2 defeat at Norwich but scores his first goals with a match-winning brace at Rotherham in late September.

Two goals followe in November - one against Huddersfield and one against Aston Villa - but the second-half of the season sees him once again relegated to the bench, with his final five outings coming as a substitute

Over the summer, he is told by Neil Warnock he doesn't feature in the club's future plans and his contract is cancelled by mutual consent

2017/18

Announces his retirement, aged 35 and having scored more league goals than any other English footballer in the 21st century - 219 in all. Of those, 106 were scored for Saints in 207 league appearances.

In all, he played for nine clubs across four divisions, winning three promotions - the last two with Saints.

A further 22 goals were scored in the FA Cup, the League Cup and the JPT - of which half were for Saints.

Rickie Lambert's Saints record

2009/10 - League 1

58 games, 36 goals (30 League, 2 FA Cup, 1 League Cup, 3 JPT)

1 – v Northampton, LC1, H W 2-0, 11 Aug 2009
2 – v Huddersfield, L1, A L 1-3, 15 Aug 2009
3 – v Stockport, L1, A D 1-1, 29 Aug 2009
4, 5 – v Yeovil Town, L1, H W 2-0, 19 Sep 2009
6 – v Bristol Rovers, L1, H L 2-3, 29 Sep 2009
7 – v Gillingham, L1, HW 4-1, 3 Oct 2009
8 – v Oldham, L1, A W 3-1, 17 Oct 2009
9 – v MK Dons, L1, H W 3-1, 24 Oct 2009
10, 11 – v Leyton Orient, L1, AD 2-2, 31 Oct 2009
12 – v Charlton, JPTQF, H W 2-1, 11 Nov 2009
13 – v Brighton, L1, HL 1-3, 15 Nov 2009
14 – v Hartlepool Utd, L1, A W 3-1, 24 Nov 2009
15 – v Wycombe, L1, HW 1-0, 1 Dec 2009
16 – v Walsall, L1, A W 3-1, 5 Dec 2009
17, 18 – v Tranmere, L1, H W 3-0, 12 Dec 2009
19 – v Colchester Utd, L1, A L 1-2, 28 Dec 2009
20 – v Luton Town, FAC3, H W 1-0, 2 Jan 2010
21 – v Millwall, L1, AD 1-1, 16 Jan 2010
22 – v Stockport, L1, HW 2-0, 30 Jan 2010
23 – v MK Dons, JPTAF, H W 3-1, 9 Feb 2010
24 – v Portsmouth, FAC5, H L 1-4, 13 Feb 2010
25 – v Walsall, L1, H W 5-1, 27 Feb 2010
26 – v Huddersfield, L1, H W 5-0, 2 Mar 2010
27, 28, 29 – v MK Dons, L1, A W 3-0, 20 Mar 2010
30 – v Hartlepool, L1, HW 3-2, 23 Mar 2010
31 – v Carlisle, JPTF, NW 4-1, 28 Mar 2010
32, 33 – v Bristol Rovers, L1, AW 5-1, 13 Apr 2010
34 – v Carlisle Utd, L1, H W 3-2, 24 Apr 2010
35, 36 – v Southend, L1, H W 3-1, 8 May 2010

2010/11—League 1

52 games, 21 goals (all League 1)

37 – v Leyton Orient, L1, H D 1-1, 21 Aug 2010
38 – v Bristol Rovers, L1, A W 4-0, 28 Aug 2010
39, 40 – v Bournemouth, L1, H W 2-0, 2 Oct 2010
41 – v Tranmere, L1, H W 2-0, 9 Oct 2010
42 – v Notts County, L1, A W 3-1, 30 Oct 2010
43 – v Huddersfield, L1, H W 4-1, 28 Dec 2010
44 – v Dagenham, L1, AW 3-1, 3 Jan 2011
45 – v Oldham, L1, AW 6-0, 11 Jan 2011
46, 47 – v Exeter City, L1, A W 2-1, 1 Feb 2011
48, 49 – v Peterborough, L1, A D 4-4, 5 Feb 2011
50 – v Carlisle Utd, L1, H W 1-0, 12 Feb 2011
51 – v Swindon Town, L1, H W 4-1, 26 Feb 2011
52 – v Bournemouth, L1, A W 3-1, 12 Mar 2011
53 – v Sheffield Wed, L1, H W 2-0, 19 Mar 2011
54 – v Leyton Orient, L1, A W 2-0, 9 Apr 2011
55 – v Hartlepool, L1, HW 2-0, 25 Apr 2011
56, 57 – v Plymouth, L1, A W 3-1, 2 May 2011

2011/12 - Cham'ship

48 games, 31 goals (27 League, 2 FA Cup, 2 League Cup)

58 – v Torquay, LC1, HW 4-1, 9 Aug 2011
59, 60 – v Ipswich, CH, A W 5-2, 16 Aug 2011
61 – v Swindon, LC2, AW 3-1, 30 Aug 2011
62, 63, 64 – v Nottm Forest, CH, H W 3-2, 10 Sep 2011
65 – v Birmingham City, CH, H W 4-1, 18 Sep 2011
66, 67 – v Watford, CH, H W 4-0, 1 Oct 2011
68 – v Derby County, CH, A D 1-1, 15 Oct 2011
69, 70, 71 – v Brighton, CH, H W 3-0, 19 Nov 2011
72, 73 – v Blackpool, CH, H D 2-2, 10 Dec 2011
74 – v Portsmouth, CH, A D 1-1, 8 Dec 2011
75 – v Millwall, FAC4, A D 1-1, 28 Jan 2012
76 – v Cardiff City, CH, H D 1-1, 31 Jan 2012
77 – v Millwall, FAC4R, H L 2-3, 7 Feb 2012
78, 79, 80 – v Watford, CH, A W 3-0, 25 Feb 2012
81 – v Leeds United, CH, A W 1-0, 3 Mar 2012
82 – v Ipswich Town, CH, H D 1-1, 6 Mar 2012
83, 84, 85 – v Millwall, CH, A W 3-2, 17 Mar 2012
86, 87 – v Crystal Palace, CH, AW 2-0, 9 Apr 2012
88 – v Reading, CH, H L 1-3, 13 Apr 2012

2012/13 - Prem Lge

38 games, 15 goals (all league)

89 – v Manchester City, PL, A L 3-2, 19 Aug 2012
90 – v Manchester Utd, PL, H L 3-2, 2 Sep 2012
91, 92 – v Aston Villa, PL, H W 4-1, 22 Sep 2012
93 – v Queens Park Rangers, PL, A W 3-1, 17 Nov 2012
94 – v Norwich City, PL, H D 1-1, 28 Nov 2012
95 – v Fulham, PL, A D 1-1, 26 Nov 2012
96 – v Stoke City, PL, AD 3-3, 29 Dec 2012
97 – v Aston Villa, PL, A W 1-0, 12 Jan 2013
98 – v Chelsea, PL, A D 2-2, 16 Jan 2013
99 – v Wigan, PL, A D 2-2, 2 Feb 2013
100 – v Newcastle , PL, A L 2-4,24 Feb 2012

Rickie Lambert is the Saints player of the year in 2009/10.

101 – v Liverpool, PL, H W 3-1, 16 Mar 2013
102 – v Chelsea, PL, H W 2-1, 30 Mar 2013
103 – v Stoke City, PL, H, D 1-1, 19 May 2013

2013/14 - Prem Lge

39 games, 14 goals (13 League, 1 FA Cup)

104 – West Brom, PL, AW 1-0, 17 Aug 2013
105 – Crystal Palace, PL, H W 2-0, 28 Sep 2013
106 – v Fulham, PL, H W 2-0, 26 Oct 2013
107 – v Hull City, PL, HW 4-1, 9 Nov 2013
108 – v Tottenham, PL, H L 2-3, 22 Dec 2013
109 – v Cardiff City, PL, A W 3-0, 26 Dec 2013
110 – v Burnley, FAC3, H W 4-3, 4 Jan 2014
111 – v Fulham, PL, A W 3-0, 1 Feb 2014
112 – v Stoke City, PL, H D 2-2, 8 Feb 2014
113 – v Norwich City, PL, H W 4-2, 15 Mar 2014
114 – v Newcastle Utd, PL, H W 4-0, 29 Mar 2014
115 – v Manchester City, PL, A L 1-4, 5 Apr 2014
116 – v Swansea City, PL, A W 1-0, 3 May 2014
117 – v Manchester Utd, PL, H D 1-1, 11 May 2014

Total

235 games, 117 goals (106 League, 5 FA Cup, 3 League Cup, 3 JP Trophy)

Butland's big chance

England wrap up their successful World Cup qualifying campaign against Lithuania on Sunday, having booked their place at next summer's tournament a game early.

Here, the Sports Pink looks at five areas of interest.

THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT?

Rarely has a national side's qualification for a World Cup been met with such a combination of ruefulness, resignation and rancour. The tepid, unimaginative display against Slovenia was one of England's worst in recent memory. The players, the management and the public at large badly need something more compelling this time.

JACK IN THE BOX

Joe Hart's grasp on the number one shirt has been slipping for some time and Jack Butland, who will start in Vilnius, is seen as the most likely candidate to topple the long-serving keeper. This, then, is Butland's big break and the only chance he has to see competitive action before the tournament.

TACTICAL TINKERING

Southgate has described the match as a chance to learn about his team and that suggests a change in formation, as well as mindset. The three-man defence seen against France and Germany may well get another airing, though the manager seems to see it as an option against better teams. If he is considering using the system in a knockout game of a major tournament he needs to

Jack Butland

drill the players in the intricacies now and road test it well.

NEW FACES

Southgate has already handed out six debuts since taking the reins a year ago and could blood three more. Harry Maguire has caught the eye with both Hull and Leicester and has impressed with his temperament. Jordan Pickford boasts a £30m price tag and has already had his first taste of Europa League football with Everton, and Harry Winks has a chance to pick up a cap despite starting just four league games in his Tottenham career. All three will be hoping what is effectively a dead rubber allows them a stress-free chance to take the field.

PITCH IMPERFECT

The artificial grass at the LFF Stadium is probably not ideal for Premier League players used to well-manicured playing surfaces. If a result was still required, it would have been the focus of a good deal more hand-wringing. But these days the changes are smaller than ever and England are unlikely to see any dramatic difference. Roy Hodgson's England side managed to win 3-0 at the same ground two years ago, so excuses will not be tolerated.

NON LEAGUE

WREXHAM 2 EASTLEIGH 1

Spitfires' woes go on in north Wales

Wendy Gee

EASTLEIGH's Vanarama National League woes continued at Wrexham under the gaze of the BT Sports cameras.

Having taken the lead through Ben Williamson in the televised team-time kick-off at the Racecourse Ground, the Spitfires succumbed to two quickfire second-half goals as the Dragons extended their unbeaten run to an impressive ten matches.

The Hampshire visitors, in contrast, are left a miserable 18th with just one win in their last nine games.

Spitfires' boss Richard Hill made four changes after Tuesday's disappointing 1-0 defeat at Boreham Wood, welcoming right-back Gavin Hoyte and top scorer Ben Williamson back to the starting line-up after injury and putting faith in the experience of player-coach Ben Strevens and veteran targetman Craig McAllister to turn their ailing fortunes around.

Eastleigh settled quickest and soon rediscovered some of the cutting edge they had been lacking during Williamson's absence with hamstring trouble.

With less than five minutes gone winger Mark Yeates drifted inside and picked out the former Cambridge United marksman who powered in a shot from a tight angle which on-loan Northampton goalkeeper Luke Coddington shovelled over with both hands.

The classy Yeates then played in 37-year-old McAllister who turned and swung his right boot at the ball, but his shot was well off target.

From looking comfortably the better side, Eastleigh came within inches of conceding on 15 minutes, but were rescued by some heroic defending from centre-back Andrew Boyce. Paul Rutherford's cross was cleared only as far as Marcus Kelly on the edge of the box. His shot looked goal-bound but Boyce, a rock-solid summer signing from Grimsby, flung his body at it and the ball deflected onto Ross Flitney's right-hand post.

That served to motivate the Dragons and Strevens was cautioned for bringing down Rutherford on 18 minutes.

Ten minutes later Wrexham's Mark Carrington joined him in the referee's notebook, guilty of simulation as he tried to buy himself a penalty after latching onto Kelly's dangerous cut-back.

With neither side imposing themselves, the game got scrappy and the yellow card tally rose to three on 37 minutes when Eastleigh's Danny Hollands was punished for catching Sam Wedgbury late just outside the centre circle.

The game was crying out for a flash of inspiration – and it was Eastleigh who provided it as the visitors seized a 44th minute lead.

It was a goal of stunning quality too.

Hollands did well to keep the ball in play on the left and find Gary McSheffrey. The 35-year-old former Coventry City man showed his pedigree, curving a sublime, inch-perfect delivery into the six-yard box where WILLIAMSON slid in to net the fifth goal of his injury-hit campaign.

Half-time: Wrexham 0 Eastleigh 1

The Dragons sought to unlock Eastleigh's defence with a couple of long balls after the break, but the first was just too far in front of Chris Holroyd and Flitney came out positively to head the second into touch.

But alarm bells rang for the Spitfires on 59 minutes when Wedgbury chased a long ball down the right and played it back into the path of Scott Boden, completely unmarked inside the area. Boden got a shot away but, this time, it was Eastleigh skipper Callum Howe who got in a vital block.

By now Wrexham had thrown on sub Jack Mackreth who instantly looked lively down the right.

Having replaced McAllister with the young legs of Cavaghn Miley on 65 minutes, Hill withdrew McSheffrey six minutes later and threw on Chris Zebroski.

But on 74 minutes Eastleigh were undone by a set-play and it was sub Zebroski who lost his man from the corner.

Kelly fizzed the ball in from the right and it was Dragons' skipper and centre-half SHAUN PEARSON who met it at the near post with a towering header.

It got worse for Eastleigh five minutes later as pumped-up Wrexham scored again.

Wedgbury found pacy sub Mackreth with a superb diagonal ball and, as the cross came in, HOLROYD clinically smashed the loose ball past Flitney.

Eastleigh: Ross Flitney, Gavin Hoyte, Sam Wood, Danny Hollands, Andrew Boyce, Callum Howe, Ben Strevens (Ross Stearn, 80), Craig McAllister (Cavaghn Miley, 65), Ben Williamson, Gary McSheffrey (Chris Zebroski, 71) , Mark Yeates. Subs (not used): James Constable, Ayo Obileye.

Attendance 3,907 (46 from Eastleigh).

Ben Williamson put Eastleigh ahead at Wrexham, but the hosts hit back to win.

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Monday's

Coxford - PM
Shirley Warren Action Church,
107-117 Warren Crescent,
5.30 & 7.30pm.
Catherine 07737 001413

Lowford – PM
Lowford Community Centre,
Portsmouth Road,
Bursledon, 5.30 & 7.30pm.
Louise 07826 848981

Regents Park – PM
Regents Park Community Centre,
Elmes Drive,
5.30pm & 7.30pm
Tricia 07767 373471

Romsey – PM
The Abbey Hall,
The Abbey,
5.30 & 7.30pm
Lynn 07971 354179

Sholing – AM& PM
St Andrews Methodist Church,
South East Road,
9.30 & 11.30am
5.30 & 7.30pm
Hayley 07772 351717

Woolston – PM
St Patricks Parish Centre,
Porchester Road,
5.30 & 7.30pm
Vanessa 07746 533898

Tuesday's

Bitterne – AM
Catholic Church Hall,
Commercial Street,
9.30, 11.30am & 1.30pm
Jo 07733 235039

Bitterne – PM
Catholic Church Hall,
Commercial Street,
5.30 & 7.30pm
Jo 07733 235039

Botley – AM
Botley Centre,
High Street,
9.15 & 11.15am
Viv 07899 736132

Hedge End – PM
St Johns Church,
Underhill Centre,
St Johns Road,
3.30, 5.30 & 7.30pm
Claire 02380 407551

Lordswood – PM
Lordswood Community Centre,
Sandpiper Road, 6.30pm
Caroline 07540 752062

Netley Abbey – PM
Abbey Hall, Victoria Road,
5.30 & 7.30pm
Claire 07917 851640

Sarisbury Green – PM
Sarisbury Green Infant School
Sarisbury Green
5.30 & 7.30pm
Amber 07969 866466

Shirley – AM
Salvation Army Hall,
Victor Street,
9.30 & 11.30am
Jane 07912 374338

Shirley – PM
Shirley Baptist Church,
Crown Street,
5:30 & 7.30pm
Jane 07912 374338

West End – AM & PM
Hilldene Community Centre,
68 High Street,
9.30 & 11.30am
3pm, 5.30pm & 7.30pm
Kay 07833 746532

Wednesday's

Bitterne Park – PM
Bitterne Park Social Club
Manor Farm Road,
5.30 & 7.30pm
Laura 07825 210006

Grange Park - PM
St Lukes Church,
St Lukes Close
Hedge End,
5.30 & 7.30pm
Kaite 07971 671206

Hamble – PM
Hamble Primary School
Hamble Lane
5.30 & 7.30pm
Viv 07899 736132

Lordshill – PM
Lordshill Church,
Lordshill District Centre,
5.30 & 7.30pm
Lynn 07971 354179

Peartree Green – AM
Peartree Church Hall,
Peartree Road,
9.30 & 11.30am
Claire 07917 851640

Sholing – PM
St Monica Primary School,
St Monica Road,
5.30 & 7.30pm
Maria 07500 714708

Thornhill Park – PM
Thornhill Baptist Church,
Thornhill Park Road,
5.30 & 7.30pm
Mel 07740 353376

Upper Shirley – AM & PM
Isaac Watts Memorial Church,
Winchester Rd,
9.30 & 11.30am, 3.30, 5.30 & 7.30pm
Catherine 07737 001413

Thursday's

Chartwell – PM
Townhill Park Community Centre,
Meggeson Avenue,
5.30pm & 7.30pm
Kay 07833 746532

Hedge End – AM & PM
KCC (Kings Community Church),
Sovereign Place,
Upper Northam Rd,
8am, 10am & 12pm
3.30, 5.30 & 7.30pm
Claire 02380 407551

Highfield – PM
Highfield House Hotel,
Highfield Lane,
6 & 8pm
Mel 07740 353376

Upper Shirley – PM
Atherley Bowling Club,
Hill Lane, 5.30 & 7.30pm
Julie 07949 256891

Weston – AM & PM
Chamberlayne Leisure Centre,
Weston Lane,
9.30 & 11.30am
3.30, 5.30 & 7.30pm
Hayley 07545 772258

Friday's

Upper Shirley – AM
Atherley Bowling Club,
Hill Lane,
7.30 & 9.30am
Julie 07949 256891

Woolston – AM
St Patricks Parish Centre,
Porchester Road,
9.15am
Claire 07917 851640

Saturday's

Merryoak– AM.
Festival Hall
Merryoak Road
8.30 & 10.30am
Matt 07834 059733

New Group from 7th October

Regents Park – AM
Regents Park Community College,
King Edwards Avenue,
9am. Tricia 07767 373471

St Deny's - AM
St Denys Community Centre,
Priory Road, 8.30 & 10.30am
Viv 07899 736132

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NON LEAGUE

Non league woe for Wrexham

EASTLEIGH'S opponents this weekend, Wrexham, are now in their 10th season of non league football following relegation from the Football League.

A regular sight in European football in the 1970s - due to winning the Welsh Cup numerous times - no established former Football League club has taken longer to return to the top four tiers than the Dragons.

Kidderminster, Rushden & Diamonds and Boston United were all relegated from League 2 before Wrexham were, but all three had only been a Football League club for a handful of seasons anyway.

Here, Elliott Binks looks at how long it has taken - or, in many cases, not taken - the clubs relegated from League 2 since 2002/03 (the first season when two went down) to reclaim their Football League place.

2002/03

Exeter City - 5 seasons
Shrewsbury - 1 season

2003/04

Carlisle United - 1 season
York City - 8 seasons

2004/05

Kidderminster - N/A
Cambridge United - 9 seasons

2005/06

Oxford United - 4 seasons
Rushden & Diamonds N/A
(reformed as AFC Rushden & Diamonds in 2011)

2006/07

Boston United N/A
Torquay United - 2 seasons

2007/08

Mansfield Town - 5 seasons
Wrexham - N/A

2008/09

Chester City - N/A
(reformed as Chester FC in 2010)
Luton Town - 5 seasons

2009/10

Grimsby Town - 6 seasons
Darlington - N/A
(reformed as Darlington 1883 in 2012)

2010/11

Lincoln City - 6 seasons
Stockport - N/A

2011/12

Hereford United - N/A
(reformed as Hereford FC in 2015)
Macclesfield Town - N/A

2012/13

Barnet - 2 seasons
Aldershot Town - N/A

2013/14

Bristol Rovers - 1 season
Torquay Utd - N/A

2014/15

Cheltenham Town - 1 season
Tranmere Rovers - N/A

2015/16

Dagenham & Red - N/A
York City - N/A

Winchester set to host Senior Cup holders

WINCHESTER City will host holders Basingstoke Town in the last 16 of the Hampshire FA Senior Cup in December.

It will no doubt be a relief to City to land home advantage, given that Basingstoke have hit such excellent form at the Camrose Ground.

That was underlined last Saturday when Town scored three times in the space of seven second-half minutes to stun high-flying Redditch United 3-0 in the Evo-Stik South Premier - their fourth home league win out of five this term.

Terry Brown's men defended well to go in 0-0 at half-time before seizing control.

The breakthrough arrived on 75 minutes when the speedy Sam

Marcus Johnson-Schuster

Smart was sent flying for a penalty which former Eastleigh marksman Ben Wright converted.

Three minutes later came a goal worthy of winning any game – a thunderbolt strike by Marcus Johnson-Schuster that fizzed into the roof of the net from 30 yards.

Still Stoke weren't finished - Callum Bunting scoring on his debut, converting Smart's cross.

Basingstoke boss Brown said: "Redditch are a good footballing side and I was happy to go in at the break 0-0. Our centre-halves Dan Bayliss and Shane Hollamby were magnificent.

"In the second half I felt we dominated and Marcus (Johnson-Schuster) has scored what could be one of the goals of the season."

New strike signing Bunting has joined Basingstoke from Chesham United.

Prior to penning forms for Chesham, he had spent a couple of years at Beaconsfield SYCOB during which time he had trials with Scunthorpe United, Crewe Alexandra and Birmingham City.

Elsewhere in the Hampshire Senior Cup third round, Romsey Town will have to pull off another giant-killing if they are to progress to the quarter-finals.

The By-Pass boys, who stunned AFC Totton on penalties in the last round, have been handed a trip to Ian Saunders' AFC Portchester, who play one tier above them in the Sydenhams Premier.

HAMPSHIRE FA SENIOR CUP

Third round (week beginning December 4): AFC Portchester v Romsey Town, Alresford Town v Hartley Wintney, Eastleigh v Bournemouth Poppies, Farnborough v AFC Bournemouth, Hamble Club v Christchurch, Moneyfields v Havant & Waterlooville, Tadley Calleva v Blackfield & Langley, Winchester City v Basingstoke Town.

Ex-Eastleigh striker Tubbs on move again

Matt joins the Terras

Wendy Gee

STRIKER Matt Tubbs has been sent out on loan to kick-start his 2017/18 campaign.

The experienced 33-year-old this week joined Weymouth on a month-long deal from National League South side Havant & Waterlooville.

Tubbs linked up with the Hawks on a free transfer from Eastleigh over the summer and signed a two-year contract at Westleigh Park.

But he has had limited opportunities at Havant due to injuries and the form of their other strikers and the Hawks are hoping a spell with the Terras will transform his season.

He is the second player to move to the Terras on a month's loan from Havant this term, following in the footsteps of centre-back Jordan Rose who scored four goals in his six-game stint at the Bob Lucas Stadium.

H&W boss Lee Bradbury explained: "Matt needs to get games under his belt. We know we will be getting a fitter and sharper player back after six or seven games at Weymouth.

Matt Tubbs. Picture by Will Kilpatrick

"It worked for Jordan Rose earlier in the season. He came back to us fully functional and ready to go. We are looking for the same to happen to our striker."

Former Salisbury, Crawley, AFC Bournemouth and Portsmouth frontman Tubbs bolsters a Weymouth attack that already boasts Ben Thomson, Brandon Goodship, Josh Wakefield and Harry Baker.

An H&W statement read: "The Hawks would like to wish Matt all the very best in his month-long move and know, with regular minutes for the Southern League side, he will prove to be a player the opposition will dread in the National League South."

Tubbs - League 2's top scorer as recently as 2014/15, when he scored over 20 goals for AFC Wimbledon and Pompey - made an impressive start for the Terras, scoring twice on Tuesday in a 3-0 Southern League Cup home victory over Wimborne Town.

The Hawks have landed a tough draw in the FA fourth qualifying round.

Their reward for beating ten-man Hayes & Yeading 4-0 is a trip to National League new boys Maidenhead United next Saturday (October 14).

Havant have won four of their six away games in the National League South, but Bradbury said: "It will be the first time we have come up against a team of their quality.

"We will be underdogs, but that is a situation we have thrived in."

Havant will have to make do without skipper Brian Stock who is likely to need surgery after injuring a knee in training. It could keep him out for at least six weeks.

Rory Williams, Jason Prior, Ryan Woodford and sub James Hayter netted Hawks' goals at Hayes & Yeading.

Got a story for us? Email echosport@dailyecho.co.uk

NON LEAGUE

New Hammer Dan makes a startling first impression

Dan Cann, left

STRIKER Dan Cann announced his arrival at Hamworthy United in emphatic fashion.

The former Poole Town, Blackfield & Langley and Winchester City man sank a hat-trick on his debut as the Hammers thumped basement boys Petersfield Town 9-0 in the Sydenhams Premier Division.

Cann's treble was topped up by a hat-trick from sub Edgar Zanin and singles from Dan O'Sullivan, Carl Preston and Steve Smith.

With his new frontman off to a flying start, Hamworthy boss Brendon King is tipping Cann to make a big impact on the Hammers' season following his switch from Evo-Stik South West outfit Wimborne Town.

"We managed to get Canny in and signed for the game on Saturday," said King.

"I think he was struggling to commit to Southern League football. He wanted to come down and play a little more locally.

"For us, it's a great signing.

"He will bring a lot to us and we are pleased to have him on board.

"He showed little bits of quality against Petersfield, which is what we'd been lacking in previous weeks."

A board of directors' statement on Wimborne Town's message board said: "Matty (Holmes, manager) has confirmed that Dan Cann has left the club.

"Dan is looking to play locally with less travelling involved to balance his work/life/football, which we fully respect and understand. A seven-day notice has been received from Hamworthy United which we have agreed to waive.

"It just leaves me, on behalf of the club, to thank Dan for his contribution over the last 12 months and wish him all the best at Hamworthy."

Saturday's win took the Hammers to fourth in the league table with seven wins and a draw from their opening nine games.

Romsey won't be pushovers

Wendy Gee

BOSS Ben Kneller does not buy into the theory that Hamble Club landed on their feet when the draw was made for the FA Vase first round proper.

The Monks, enjoying their first season in the Vase following promotion to the Sydenhams Premier Division, will travel to Wessex One outfit Romsey Town on Saturday, October 21.

They have already knocked out two rival top-flight sides, Bemerton Heath Harlequins (3-1) and Petersfield Town (5-0), to reach this stage of the competition, but Kneller views Romsey as a potential stumbling block.

Already Andy Samuels' Bypass Boys have triggered a couple of cup upsets this season, turfing Southern League outfit AFC Totton out of the Hampshire FA Senior Cup on penalties before extinguishing Bournemouth Poppies' Vase flame 2-0.

Although champions Hamble Club were undoubtedly the class act of Sydenhams One last season, their last competitive visit to the Bypass Ground ended in a 1-0 defeat, settled by a Tom Donaldson goal in late February.

"We've got Romsey in the Vase and, while people might say that's a favourable draw, I expect Totton and Poppies probably thought that as well," said a cautious Kneller.

"When we lost there in the league last season, that was a turning point for us. We said that if we carried on playing like that, we wouldn't win the league.

Tom Donaldson (11) scores Romsey's winner against Hamble last season. Inset - Andy Samuels.

"We played Romsey in pre-season and beat them, 5-1 I think, but they probably experimented with their side that day, the same as we did, so it doesn't mean a lot.

"Everyone's going to be looking at us to win the Vase game, but it's going to be tough. We're the favourites and Romsey have got nothing to lose.

"I know their manager Andy Samuels and he's got a good side there. Romsey should be right up there in Wessex One this season with the likes of Laverstock and Christchurch. It would be nice to have another local club come up into the Premier Division."

Donaldson was again on target as Romsey overcame Alton 3-0 in the league last Saturday. He added to earlier goals from Pearce Farren and Tom Ashton, taking the Bypass Boys into second spot.

FA Vase, first round proper (Wessex ties): AFC Portchester v Cullompton, Baffins Milton v Radstock Town, Bashley v Bridgwater, Brockenhurst v Crediton, Fareham v Ivybridge Town, Farnham v Lymington Town, Frimley Green v Blackfield & Langley, Hengrove Athletic v Alton, Highworth Town v Sholing, Newport IoW v Bovey Tracey, Portland v Horndean, Romsey v Hamble Club, Wellington AFC v Downton.

Non league fixtures

Monday, October 9
EVO-STIK SOUTH
Premier: Dorchester Town v Gosport Borough.

Tuesday, October 10
EVO-STIK SOUTH
Premier: Banbury v Hereford, Biggleswade v Kettering, Bishops Stortford v Chesham, Kings Lynn v Hitchin, Merthyr Town v Slough, Royston v St Ives, St Neots v Dunstable.
West: Yate v Cinderford.
SYDENHAMS WESSEX LEAGUE
Premier Division: AFC Portchester v Cowes Sports (7.30), Amesbury v Hamble Club, Brockenhurst v Bemerton HH, Hamworthy Utd v Baffins MR, Lymington Town v Bashley, Newport IW v Horndean, Portland v Bournemouth Poppies, Shaftesbury v Andover Town.
Sydenhams League Cup, second round: Ringwood Town v Sholing.
BOURNEMOUTH SENIOR CUP
Quarter-final: Verwood Town Res v Sway.

Wednesday, October 11
EVO-STIK SOUTH
Premier: Farnborough v Weymouth.
SYDENHAMS WESSEX LEAGUE
Premier Division: Alresford v Fareham Town.
NEW FOREST CARE HAMPSHIRE PREMIER LEAGUE
Premier Division: Stockbridge v QK Southampton (7.30)

Thursday, October 12
SOUTHAMPTON SENIOR CUP
Winchester City v AFC Stoneham.

Saturday, October 14
FA CUP
Fourth qualifying round: Brackley Town v Hungerford Town or Billericay Town, Dagenham & Redbridge v Leyton Orient, Eastleigh v Hereford, Aldershot Town v Torquay Utd, Bath City v Chelmsford City, Oxford City v Bognor Regis Town, Maidenhead Utd v Havant & Waterlooville, Haringey Borough v Heybridge Swifts, Woking v Concord Rangers, Hampton & Richmond Borough v Truro City, Dover Athletic v Bromley, Slough Town v Folkestone Invicta, Burgess Hill Town v Dartford, St Albans City v Boreham Wood, Maidstone United v Enfield Town, Margate v Leatherhead, Paulton Rovers v Sutton Utd, East Thurrock Utd or Harlow Town v Ebbsfleet Utd, FC Halifax Town v Tranmere Rovers, Solihull Moors v 1874 Northwich or Ossett Town, South Shields v Hartlepool Utd, Shaw Lane Association v Barrow, Chorley v Boston Utd, Stafford Rangers or AFC Telford United v Stockport County or FC United Of Manchester, Harrogate Town or Bradford (Park Avenue) v Leamington or Gainsborough Trinity, Nantwich Town v Kettering Town, Buxton v Gateshead,Guiseley v Shildon, AFC Fylde v Wrexham, Kidderminster Harriers v Chester, Scarborough Athletic or Stratford Town v Hyde Utd, Stourbridge v Macclesfield Town.
VANARAMA NATIONAL LEAGUE SOUTH
Chippenham v Wealdstone, East Thurrock v Gloucester City, Eastbourne Borough v Hemel Hempstead, Weston-super-Mare v Welling, Whitehawk v Hungerford.
EVO-STIK SOUTH
Premier: Bishops Stortford v Basingstoke Town, Dorchester v Chesham, Farnborough v Hitchin, Kings Lynn v Kings Langley, Merthyr Town v Gosport Borough, Redditch v St Ives, Royston v Frome, St Neots v Weymouth, Stratford v Dunstable.
West: Bideford v Cirencester, Bishops Cleeve v Barnstaple, Cinderford v AFC Totton, Evesham v Didcot, Larkhall v Kidlington, North Leigh v Wimborne, Slimbridge v Salisbury, Swindon Supermarine v Taunton, Winchester City v Bristol Manor Farm, Yate v Shortwood.
SYDENHAMS WESSEX LEAGUE
Premier Division: Andover Town v Blackfield & Langley, Baffins MR v Portland, Bashley v Fareham, Bemerton HH v Sholing, Bournemouth Poppies v Alresford, Hamworthy Utd v AFC Portchester, Horndean v Hamble Club, Petersfield v Lymington Town, Shaftesbury v Newport IW, Team Solent v Brockenhurst.
Division One: AFC Stoneham v Laverstock & Ford, Alton v Verwood, Andover NS v Ringwood, Downton v Whitchurch, New Milton v US Portsmouth, Romsey v Christchurch, Tadley Calleva v Fawley, Totton & Eling v Folland Sports.
SOUTHAMPTON SENIOR CUP
Second round: Colden Common v Hythe & Dibden.
WILTSHIRE SENIOR CUP
Purton v Amesbury Town.
NEW FOREST CARE HAMPSHIRE PREMIER LEAGUE
NFCHP League Cup, second round: Bush Hill v Liss, Infinity v AFC Petersfield, Liphook v Fleetlands, Netley Central Sports v Stockbridge, Paulsgrove v Overton, Sway v Lyndhurst.
Premier Division: Clanfield v Locks Heath, QK Southampton v Hayling Utd, Winchester Castle v Hedge End Rangers.
Division One: Michelmersh & Timsbury v Upham, South Wonston Swifts v Headley utd.
Combination: Fleetlands v Liphook, Hayling Utd v Winchester Castle, Headley v Clanfield, Overton v QK Southampton.

NON LEAGUE

Toughest decision for Danny

FORMER Gosport Borough assistant manager Danny Thompson, who briefly took caretaker charge following the departure of Alex Pike, has left the club.

He was offered the chance to stay on as part of the coaching team by new boss Mick Catlin, but felt it wasn't right for him.

Admitting it was not an easy parting of the ways, he said: "People that know me will know that this has been the toughest decision I've had to make as I have great affection for the club.

"I would like to thank the club for my short time in charge of first-team affairs. It has been a honour to be in charge for the last two matches and something I have learnt a lot from in a short space of time.

"I have seen a togetherness and improvement on the pitch at Stratford and, more recently, at Kings Langley where, for the first time this season, we managed to come away with a well-earned point and get off the bottom of the league.

Mick Catlin

"I would like to wish Cats all the best and hopefully he can carry on from that positive result."

Winchester crash out

WINCHESTER City's FA Trophy run is over after they lost 3-1 at Kidlington this weekend.

The hosts took the lead in the 52nd minute when Tom Franklin set up Lewis COYLE.

Winchester levelled in the 74th minutes when Josh HARFIELD scored following a goalmouth scramble.

Three minutes later sub Darius Browne crossed to enable WILLIAMS to regain the Oxfordshire club's lead.

Kidlington had near misses with Elliott Osborne-Ricketts coming close.

In time added on, BROWNE made it 3-1 shortly after City's Adam Tomasso was sent off for a second booking.

AFC Totton are still in, though, after a superb 1-1 draw at fellow Southern League West side Taunton Town.

Ben Adelsbury gave the hosts the lead but Craig Feeney equalised for the Stags.

When your luck is out, it's well and truly out!

Jamie Brown

GOSPORT Borough are living proof that when your luck's out, it's out.

New boss Mick Catlin was just moments away from his first win in charge on Tuesday as Borough led Moneyfields 2-1 in the BigFreeBet.com Challenge Cup at Privett Park.

But there was a painful sting in the tail as Sam Pearce - a former Borough stalwart - hauled Southern League new boys Moneyfields back from the brink with a stunning late leveller and the visitors went on to win the first round tie 4-3 on penalties.

Two good early stops by Moneys' former AFC Totton goalkeeper Steve Mowthorpe kept Borough at bay before Kurt Watts fired the hosts ahead.

Ryan Pennery equalised, but Borough hit back three minutes later through Iffy Onwauchu.

A terrific save by Gosport stopper Lewis Watch denied Gary Austin at point-blank range, but Moneys kept going and Pearce's stunning strike made it 2-2 in stoppage-time.

"We played well in spells, but we have to keep it up for the whole game," said a frustrated Catlin.

The new boss's first league game in charge had ended in a 3-0 home defeat by Hitchin Town last Saturday, keeping them second-to-bottom of the Evo-Stik South Premier.

One positive was the return of former Borough skipper Jamie Brown, who has been signed by Catlin following spells with Basingstoke Town and Winchester City.

Brown, renowned for his never-say-die spirit, has the battling qualities Borough are going to need.

Now 36, the ex-Eastleigh midfielder was a firm fans' favourite from 2011-2014, playing an integral part in the Borough team that climbed into the Conference South and made the 2014 FA Trophy final at Wembley.

"I need his experience and someone like him to come in and do a job," said Catlin.

Jack's injury was a turning point - Louis

Wendy Gee

AFC TOTTON boss Louis Langdown felt the loss of defender Jack Smith to a badly cut lip was a turning point in last Saturday's 1-1 draw at Wimborne.

And the frustrating part is that he could see the injury coming and had voiced his concerns to the match officials.

With the Stags 1-0 up through Nathaniel Sherborne, Smith was caught in the mouth by a stray elbow, ruling him out for the second half.

The cut was so bad that the ex-Eastleigh youngster, who recently joined Totton from Farnborough, wound up in hospital having it stitched.

Without him, Totton conceded a headed equaliser from a corner at the start of the second half. It was scored by ex-Stag Matt Oldring – the very man Smith would have been marking.

Frustrating

"It's really frustrating that we lost Jack because we saw it coming," said Langdown. "Their lad had been leading with his arm all afternoon and I'd already spoken to the referee about it.

"The ref could have nipped it in the bud, but he didn't and it's cost us.

"Jack ended up taking an elbow right in the face and it split his lip open.

"His loss did affect us because he was dominating play and, when he came off, we had to move Ollie (Ian Oliver) inside into the middle of defence and Jack Masterton, who had started well in the middle of the park, went to left-back.

Totton manager Louis Langdown. Inset right - Jack Smith.

"We conceded a goal just after half-time and it was Jack Smith's man who scored it!"

Despite his obvious frustration, Langdown was still chuffed to bank a solid away point following wins over Larkhall Athletic and North Leigh. It left the Stags on the fringes of the play-offs in seventh.

"I'm well pleased," said the boss. "It keeps the positive results going.

"From where we were last year to where we are this year, it's drastically different.

"I thought we shaded the first half and we got the goal which came about after a great bit of link-up play between Feens and Sherbs (Craig Feeney and Nathaniel Sherborne).

"We had more of the ball in the first half, but in the second half, after what happened to Jack, we had to reorganise.

"But we dug in and deserved the draw.

"Ian Oliver did great for us, he snuffed out their danger man (Toby Holmes) and stopped him from scoring. Sherbs also did ever so well. He worked tirelessly and it was great to see him score.

"In their previous two games Wimborne had been 1-0 down at Bideford and Evesham and won both games 2-1, so it's got to be a good point for us."

NON LEAGUE

Folland are desperate for new manager to take over

FOLLAND Sports are on their brink of naming a new manager.

Having whittled their shortlist down to three, the Sydenhams One strugglers are hoping to make an announcement this weekend.

The new appointment can't come quickly enough judging by Tuesday's painful capitulation at table-topping Laverstock & Ford, where the Planemakers were thumped 9-0 in Sydenhams One.

Clubmen Bradley Hartill, Jason Simmonds and Martin Coe have been looking after things on a temporary basis, but none of them is interested in the job long-term.

"We've been thinking of a joint managers' role, but I don't know if the two main candidates would work together. If not, we would have to choose one," said chairman Roy Kingdon.

"We've lost all our Portsmouth-based players since (former bosses) Bjay Green and Richard Elmes went, but the only one I'm upset to lose is James Franklyn. The others didn't really perform.

"I said to the players at the beginning of the season 'don't sign unless you're committed' but it seemed to go in one ear and out the other.

"We need more commitment from our team and we need to start learning how to defend. We got mullered at Laverstock on Tuesday.

"During my whole tenure as chairman, we've been leaking an average of three goals a game and that's not good enough.

"Everyone's got to roll their sleeves up and fight our way up the table.

"The individual talent pool is there, but it's getting them to work as a team.

"We haven't had that team spirit for the best part of my chairmanship and he who can get us to work together is a kingmaker."

Laverstock ran riot with Lewis Wykes (2), Rob Gallagher (2), Ben Rankin (2), James Clifton, Olly Hoare and Scott Donaldson piling on the agony for the Planemakers.

Holmes: Totton are transformed

Wendy **Gee**

WIMBORNE Town boss Matty Holmes was content with a 1-1 draw against a much improved AFC Totton in the Evo-Stik South West last weekend.

Matt Oldring's early second-half header earned the Magpies a share of the spoils against his old club after Nathaniel Sherborne had fired the Stags ahead in the first period.

Reflecting on the result, Holmes said: "In the second half we got on top of the game and were perhaps the team in the ascendency, so maybe there's slight disappointment we didn't get all three points.

"However, I think Totton shaded the first half, so it was a fair result.

"They are a top-six side and much transformed from last year.

"We're just glad to continue our unbeaten run."

Magpies' unbeaten streak has coincided with the return of talismanic captain Scott Arnold, who received praise from his manager following his return from injury.

Holmes said: "Scott has been fantastic. With more than 500 games behind him, he is experienced and, when he's injured, his knowledge of the game is a big miss on the pitch.

"Since he's come back he's been tremendous and that's contributed to the run we've had."

Holmes confirmed Poole Town loan ace Luke Burbidge would continue to play for Wimborne for at least the next month.

The funds freed up by Dan Cann's move to Hamworthy United had no bearing on Burbidge's situation, according to the Cuthbury boss.

Holmes said: "Luke is staying for another month and that was never going to be affected by Dan Cann.

"Dan had to leave due to family reasons. There's less travelling with Hamworthy and perhaps better pay.

"We've only got 16 in the squad so it's a very light squad, meaning I have to try to bring in another player.

"We struggle to get players in anyway because Wessex League teams in the area pay better than us."

Although a solid start has left the Magpies on the brink of the play-off spots, Holmes is not dreaming of a top-six finish just yet.

"I'm not interested in the play-offs at this stage – I want to get to 35 points like we said last year," he said. "When we get to that point, we can start looking up."

Wimborne's Toby Holmes on the ball against AFC Totton (photo: WTFC).

Zach's the top scorer

Zach Glasspool of Andover Town entered this weekend's games as the leading scorer in the Sydenhams Wessex League.

The former Winchester City striker has 15 league and cup goals to his name - one more than Tom Scott of AFC Portchester and Blackfield's former Saints striker Jamie White.

Hamble's Nathan Lynch is one of two players on 13 goals - alongside Mitchell Speechley-Price of Brockenhurst.

12 goals - Joel Jackson (Baffins Milton), Simon Woods (Fareham).

11 goals - Michael Gosney (Andover Town), Harry Jackson (Horndean), Sami Makhloufi (Bournemouth).

10 goals - Harry Beckley (Amesbury Town/Shaftesbury), Sam House (Lymington Town), Tom Sands (Alresford Town).

River Smith of Ringwood Town is the hottest shot in Division 1 of the Wessex League.

He he struck 14 goals in all competitions so far, putting him one ahead of US Portsmouth's Jorden Neal.

11 goals - Robert Gallagher (Laverstock & Ford)

10 goals - Lee Vint (Ringwood Town)

Eight goals - Paul Coventry (Tadley Calleva) , Steve Flynn (New Milton), Jack Satterley (Christchurch)

Seven goals - Brett Denham (Tadley Calleva), Daniel Fox (Romsey Town), William Harris (AFC Stoneham), Luke Stone (Christchurch), Taylor Watts (Alton), Lewis Wykes (Laverstock & Ford)

● **Jake Alford and Joshua**

Zach Glasspool

Benfield are leading the race to be crowned the Hampshire Premier League's Golden Boot.

Alford, of Fleetlands, and Liss Athletic's Benfield both went into this weekend's games with 10 HPL league and cup goals to their name.

Alford has netted his in 10 appearances, while Benfield has struck his in just seven outings.

Four players have nine goals - Bush Hill's Nathan Gray, Steven Harding of Liphook, Alex Miroy of Paulsgrove and Sway's Ryan Brading.

Eight goals - QK Southampton's Babucarr Bojang and Daniel Phillips of Infinity.

Seven goals - Ross Cook (Overton United), Danny Lane (Hayling), Harry Potter (Clanfield), Cain Prentice (Bush Hill).

Alex White of Netley Central is the joint top scorer in Division 1 of the HPL.

He has nine goals from as many matches - the same as Upham's Luke Maurin.

Lyndhurst's Chris Pye has seven goals, while Guy Bewick of South Wonston Swifts has six.

Five goals - Martin Burt (Four Marks), Michael Mullen (Netley Central) , Liam Nancholas (South Wonston), Elliot Weaver (Lyndhurst).

NON LEAGUE

Romsey are on a roll ...

ROMSEY Town are on a roll in the Sydenhams Division One.

Andy Samuels' side made it six wins from their last seven league matches by beating Alton 3-0 at the Bypass Ground, leaving them second in the table.

Pearce Farren broke the deadlock, latching onto Tom Ashton's cross and steering the ball in via the crossbar.

Alton were reduced to ten men following an off-the-ball incident and, after soaking up some pressure, Romsey doubled their lead through Ashton after he had been played in by sub Elliott Mitchell-Lee.

Farren set up the third, slipping the ball into the path of Tom Donaldson who coolly found the bottom corner.

After ending September unbeaten, Town boss Samuels said: "Credit to the lads, they've continued with how I want them to play and are getting their rewards for working hard each game.

Romsey v Alton

"The only down side to the month was letting the three-goal lead slip against New Milton, but we've learned from that and moved on and that's shown in our games the past couple of weeks.

"We need to start believing and continue to play how we have as we face another month of tricky matches."

Romsey were missing six key players due to suspension and injury for Tuesday night's daunting Sydenhams League Cup assignment at Blackfield & Langley.

They gave a good account of themselves, but were ultimately overpowered 4-0 by the unbeaten Sydenhams Premier leaders who had reeled off 11 straight league victories followed by a draw against Hamble Club.

Romsey's cause was not helped by losing key defender Kel Crook to a hamstring injury at 2-0 down. To add to their woes, Ashton was also forced off late in the game.

Dolphins utility player Cook signs for City

WINCHESTER City have added to their squad by signing Joe Cook on dual-registration forms from Poole Town.

Cook, who can operate at centre-back or in central midfield, joined the Dolphins in August this year having previously been on Sheffield Wednesday's books as a youth player.

"Pete Millard (Winchester's chief scout) had seen Joe play a few times and I spoke to Poole manager Tommy Killick about getting him with us," City boss Craig Davis explained.

"We've seen him play for Poole's development team and he's a good young lad with a good pedigree."

Cook was one of several young recruits to join Poole during the summer. Speaking at the time, Dolphins chairman Chris Reeves said of the 18-year-old: "He has had a few minutes in our pre-season friendlies and looks very competent.

"He is a player we have very high hopes for.

"If the situation with (AFC Bournemouth loanee) Sam Surridge that we had last year is anything to go by, then there is a certain type of player who will just get better and better

Teams can't cope with 'pace barrage'

Wendy Gee

CHRIS Ibbeson was not the first player to be bamboozled by Winchester City's pace this season – and he surely won't be the last.

The hapless Barnstaple defender was sent off in a matter of seconds at Mill Road last Saturday having been panicked into a reckless challenge by the sheer speed of City winger Rob Carr.

Having skipped past the Barum defence, the former Fleet wideman was bearing down on goal at a rate of knots when Ibbeson slid in and took his legs from under him outside the box. It left referee Andrew Evans no alternative but to brandish the red card.

Tellingly, it was the fourth occasion already this season that the Citizens had had a player sent off against them in league and cup.

Winchester went on to punish the ten men 4-1 with fellow speed merchants Simba Mlambo and Oli Bailey (2) also on target along with centre-back Rob Flooks who met Carr's cross with a powerful back-post header.

Manager Craig Davis said: "We've had a few games now where an opposition player has been shown the red card.

"You could say it's lucky that players keep getting sent off against us, but I wouldn't.

"You can have the odd lucky sending off but, with us, it's because teams aren't able to cope with the constant barrage of pace.

"The pace of our front players – Simba, Oli and Rob – is frightening. We've got so many players in the team who are fast.

"They nick the ball past players, who then bring them down.

"Yet again, at Barnstaple, our pace was the undoing of the opposition.

"Rob Carr burst through on goal and their lad has just scythed him down. It was silly, I guess. The defender should just have taken 1-0 and kept 11 men on the pitch."

Winchester's Rob Carr, left.

It was Winchester's third straight league victory, hoisting them to fourth in the Evo-Stik South West.

And while Davis appreciates that there is still a long way to go, he is massively encouraged by City's early-season progress.

"It's true that you don't win anything in September, but you can lose stuff in September. If you have a poor start, you end up playing catch-up," he said.

"We've got a tough month of games ahead of us, but at least we've given ourselves a bit of breathing space with the results we've had.

"We can play better than we did at Barnstaple, but it was a still a good performance and good result. A few teams locally will have played them and they'll know that they're a gigantic side who play to their strengths and just throw the ball in from every angle.

"We were without Josh Harfield (work commitments), who is probably our biggest player, but Joe Hayward came in at the back and did a sterling job.

"League tables don't mean much at this stage. However, it's a very good platform for us.

"Eighteen points from eight games is decent, especially bearing in mind that we have only played three games at home!"

NON LEAGUE

Table-topping Blackfield increasing their strike options

Lewis Tallack.

SYDENHAMS Premier pace-setters Blackfield & Langley have increased their strike options - after banging in an impressive 38 goals in their opening 12 league games.

Having got international clearance for Carl Walshe, they handed the 24-year-old Irishman his debut against Division One high-fliers Romsey Town in the League Cup on Tuesday – and he scored with his first touch!

Walshe has arrived at Gang Warily with a decent pedigree. He played for Shelbourne and Drogheda United in the League of Ireland and had spell with Portsmouth as a youngster.

He signed for Portsmouth in 2009 before being released three years later and returning to his native Ireland via non-League stints with Frome Town (loan) and Bognor Regis Town.

Explaining Walshe's arrival at Blackfield, co-assistant boss Chris Farrell said: "He's a friend of Lewis Tallack (B&L full-back, also ex-Portsmouth).

"He was at Pompey for a while, returned to Ireland and then came back here, got himself a job, got a couple of promotions and football went further down the agenda.

First touch

"He did okay on Tuesday considering he hadn't played for the best part of a year.

"He scored with his first touch and it was a good team goal too. We moved the ball through midfield and Kane Daysh played him through."

Further goals from Joe Butcher, Jordan Ngalo and Liam Triggs saw the Watersiders smoothly through to the League Cup third round where they face another home tie against US Portsmouth.

Describing Tuesday's opponents Romsey as "a credit to themselves", Farrell said: "They're a neat, tidy, compact side who tried to play football.

"In the first half they caused us one or two problems, but we scored some good team goals."

Farrell was also highly complimentary of Premier new boys Hamble Club who, in drawing 1-1 at Gang Warily last Saturday, wrecked Blackfield's 100 per cent start to the league season.

Monks' skipper Liam Crook nodded the visitors in front before Daysh replied, also with a header after 23 minutes.

"Hamble worked hard and played very well. They had three or four players missing and could easily have won the game," he said.

"They've got a team full of experienced Wessex players, had good shape, a good work ethic and always looked dangerous on the break. They were full value for the point."

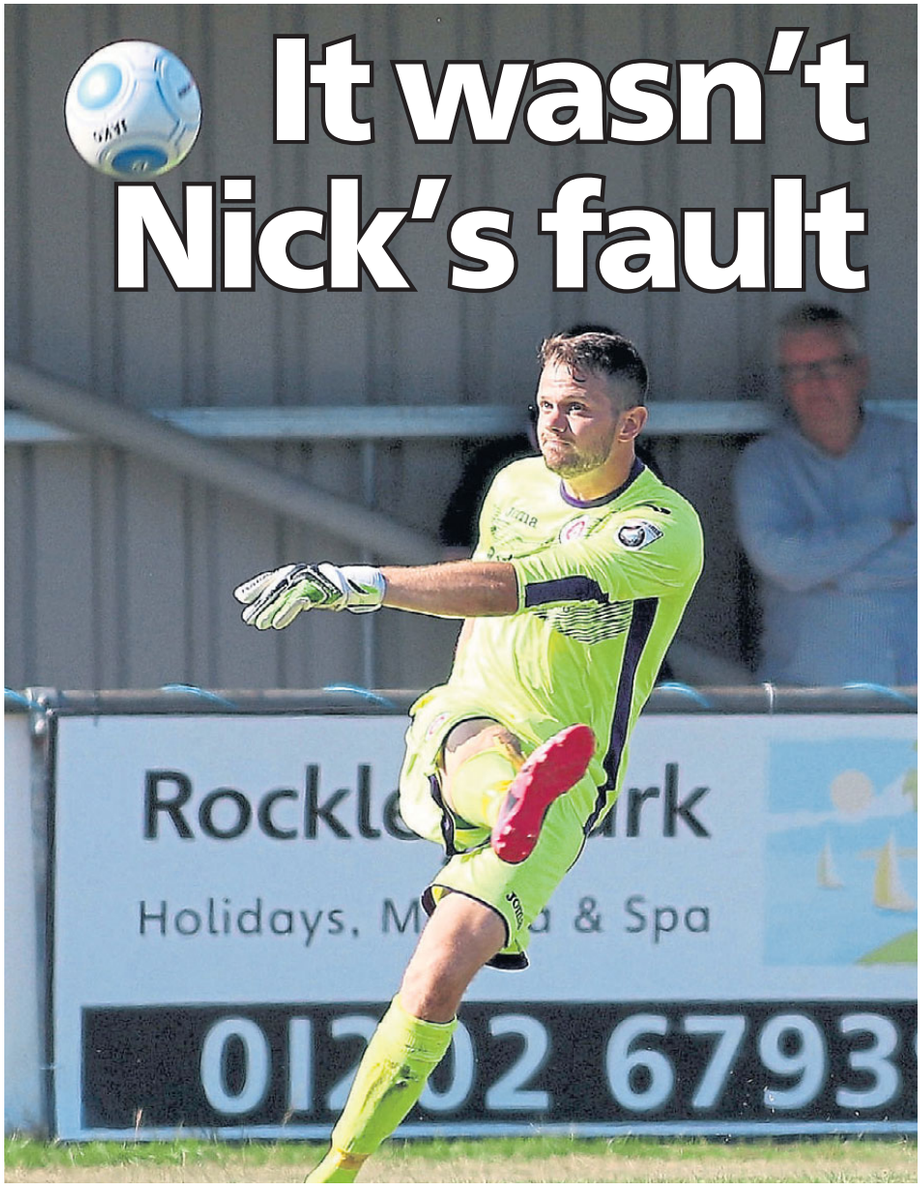
Sydenhams League Cup 3rd round draw

Andover New Street v Lymington Town, Blackfield & Langley v US Portsmouth, Hamble Club v Bashley or Alresford Town, Horndean v AFC Portchester or Cowes Sports, Newport IW v Baffins Milton Rovers, Ringwood Town or Sholing v Petersfield Town, Shafesbury or East Cowes Vics or Fawley v AFC Stoneham, Verwood Town v Hamworthy Utd.

Liam Crook.

Wendy Gee

It wasn't Nick's fault



Nick Hutchings. Picture by Andy Orman.

POOLE Town assistant manager Callum Brooks refused to point the finger of blame at goalkeeper Nick Hutchings after his error sent the Dolphins tumbling out of the FA Cup 2-1 at Slough Town.

Having taken the lead with a superb solo effort from former Alresford and Winchester City maestro Warren Bentley, Poole were pegged back by a header from Slough's Chris Flood - another ex-Winchester man - on 57 minutes, writes Dan Rose.

And disaster struck for the visitors seven minutes from time as Southern Premier Slough found a third qualifying round winner.

George Wells fired a left-footed effort which was spilled by Hutchings and ended up squirming into the net to send Poole out.

Brooks, who had stepped up to manage the side with boss Tom Killick unavailable, stressed he would not be placing the blame for the result on his goalkeeper.

"Nick was devastated by the mistake, as were all the lads," he said.

"If someone had not followed an instruction or shown a lack of desire, you can start pointing fingers.

"But Nick would catch that ball 999 times out of 1,000. It was a clear-cut mistake, nobody does it on purpose and, ultimately, it cost us their second goal.

"If you make a mistake as a keeper, ultimately, it can lead to a goal but I wasn't going to start pointing the finger at him.

"Nick has kept us in loads of games over the couple of years I have been at the club.

"I tried to console him after and remind him of the better days he has had. The boys were fine with him because they have seen him make unreal saves which you wouldn't expect.

"It's the equivalent of a striker missing a goal from a yard. You don't tell them to do it and they don't try to do it. Sometimes, mistakes happen."

The result meant Poole missed out on a valuable replay against the Rebels and also the chance to gain £7,500 in prize money.

It was the second time the National League South Dolphins had crashed out of the Cup against lower league opposition in successive seasons, having been beaten by eventual Southern League champions Chippenham Town last term.

"We are massively disappointed to be knocked out after being in a good position," added Brooks.

"They are flying high in the league below and scoring plenty of goals, so we knew we were going to come under some pressure.

"We had planned for that and it was an ideal first half.

"We looked dangerous on the counter-attack and a little bit of quality gave us the lead.

"For us it was a feeling of missed opportunity, disappointment, and we have to find a way to

NON LEAGUE

Aaron was 'desperate' to sign

SALISBURY'S new arrival Aaron Dawson says he was "desperate to sign" after speaking to boss Steve Claridge.

The 25-year-old former Exeter City midfielder has joined the ambitious Evo-Stik South West outfit from Gosport Borough

He made his debut last Saturday in Salisbury's 0-0 draw against Bishops Cleeve and said: "I chose to join Salisbury because it's a club that excites me. After speaking to the gaffer and hearing about how the club is run, I was desperate to sign.

"I believe it's a club on the rise again. I know I'm not alone when I say I'm not here to be playing in this division for a long time.

"This club should, in

Aaron Dawson. Picture: John Rose)

my opinion, be at least two divisions above and everyone is working hard to achieve this."

Dawson feels instantly at home at Old Sarum and said: "It's a good group of lads here, so it hasn't been difficult to settle in.

"It's more a case of getting to know how certain players play and building partnerships."

Of late, Salisbury have lacked creativity in important games and Dawson believes he can bring organisation, energy and a bit of bite to the side.

Claridge agreed: "He's a good all-round player, a winner and an organiser - what we've been looking for. He's got a great attitude.

"Whenever I've watched him, he's never given less than 100 per cent under difficult circumstances at Gosport.

"That's the type of player I want."

Hill expecting a large Hereford FC support

Richard Hill.

Hereford United became one of the FA Cup's iconic names 45 years ago.

As a non league club, they famously beat First Division Newcastle United 2-1 in a third round replay at a muddy Edgar Street in 1972.

That sprinkling of Cup fairy-dust still sparkles all these years later and the modern-day Bulls attract attendances way in excess of their league status.

Hereford FC's average home gate this season is 2,610, the seventh biggest in the whole of non-League.

The two-leagues-higher Eastleigh are 11th with 2,154.

"It's an interesting tie," said Spitfires boss Richard Hill.

"Hereford have a good following and, I may be way wide of the mark here, but it wouldn't surprise me if they brought a couple of thousand with them."

Best supported non league clubs 2017/18

Wrexham 4,428
Leyton Orient 4,288
Tranmere 4,041
Hartlepool 3,476
York City 2,991
Stockport 2,984
Hereford 2,610
Maidstone 2,436
Aldershot 2,230
Sutton 2,228
Eastleigh 2,154
Woking 2,057
Torquay 1,999
Chester 1,961

● Of the 14 clubs with the highest average, 11 are either former Football League clubs or clubs formed out of the ashes of a former Football League club.

'No reason we can't cause a cup upset'

Wendy **Gee**

PETE Beadle is looking forward to gauging the progress of his Hereford team against Eastleigh in the FA Cup.

The Bulls boss reckons next weekend's fourth qualifying round tie at the Silverlake Stadium will provide a useful "benchmark" against Richard Hill's Vanarama National League thoroughbreds.

Born from the ashes of the old Hereford United, the new club are intent on climbing their way up back up the pyramid and reclaiming a place in the Football League.

After winning the Midland Premier Division and the Southern One South & West in quick succession, they are now nicely poised to challenge for promotion from the Evo-Stik South Premier.

Reacting to the fourth qualifying round draw, Beadle said: "It was never going to be easy whoever we faced.

"Eastleigh are a well-established Conference side that have wanted to push on but, for whatever reason, that hasn't happened.

"They're not sitting that highly in the table, but they haven't lost many games.

"It's not going to be an easy task, but it's a game we're looking forward to because it will be a benchmark of where we are.

"Eastleigh have got ambitions to be a Football League club and have got people there with a lot of experience.

"Andy Hessenthaler (assistant manager) is there, who I played with at Watford, and their manager Richard Hill is similar to him – he knows the game inside out."

Hereford boss Peter Beadle.

Beadle will set his Bulls side up to win, but knows they can't go "gung-ho" early on.

"In every game we play, we try and be positive," he said. "We always set up to win the game, but this time it will be without the pressure of being expected to win it.

"It's 11 v 11 and, if we go into the game thinking 'what if we lose', then doubts creep in. There's no reason we cannot cause an upset."

NON LEAGUE

Ex-Saint is aiming to dump Eastleigh out of FA Cup

Garyn Preen in action for Saints U18s.

A FORMER Saints academy player will be aiming to dump Eastleigh out of the FA Cup on his south coast return next weekend.

Hereford FC winger Garyn Preen spent six years at Staplewood, but unlike several of his youth team colleagues never progressed to the first team scene.

The nearest he got was a place on the substitutes bench for a League 1 clash against Gillingham at St Mary's eight years ago this month.

On being released by Saints in the summer of 2010, Preen went on to make his professional debut for Burton Albion. But after just three appearances for the Brewers - one in League 2, one in the League Cup and one in the JPT - he was released again.

Drifting down into non league football, he returned to his native Wales to sign for Neath before a short spell at Salisbury City in 2012.

Spells at Merthyr, Cinderford, Afon Lido and Hungerford followed, before he racked up at upwardly mobile Hereford.

Preen has scored four times for the Bulls so far this term, including a double in a 5-2 Southern Premier League win over Stratford. He was also on target in a 4-0 FA Cup second qualifying round victory over Kempston Rovers.

Goal machine Mills

Simon Carter

John Mills scores for Hereford against Godalming in the FA Cup this season.

ONE man Eastleigh will have to watch in next weekend's FA Cup fourth qualifying round is lower league goal machine John Mills.

Mills has incredibly scored over 40 league and cup goals in each of the last three seasons - the first for Didcot Town and the second two for Hereford.

Mills made his name at Didcot in the 2014/15 Southern League Division 1 South & West season, firing a barely believable 57 in all competitions.

By the time he had netted a hat-trick against Wimborne on November 22 2014, he had already struck 31 of those 57 goals!

Two more strikes followed in January 2015 when Didcot defeated Sholing 3-1 - ex-Saint Josh Dutton-Black also on target for the hosts.

Unsurprisingly, Mills won the Golden Boot at the National Game Awards at Fulham's Craven Cottage after finishing as the top scorer in the whole non-league pyramid.

Following those exploits, the newly-formed Hereford FC made him one of their first signings in the summer of 2015.

Mills was happy to join the Bulls, even though they were starting at a level below Didcot - in the Midland Alliance.

The striker made an instant impact for Hereford, hitting a hat-trick on his debut against Dunkirk.

After just 12 games he had struck 19 times - including four hat-tricks - and a fifth treble on Boxing Day 2015 took his tally to 36.

He ended with 52 in all competitions as Hereford completed a Midland Alliance League and Cup double, as well as winning the Herefordshire County Cup.

In the league, Hereford won 35 of their 42 games, winning 108 points and scoring 138 goals.

At one stage, the club racked up 27 successive wins in all competitions.

They also reached the FA Vase final - beating Salisbury, another phoenix club playing in their debut season, in the semi-final - where they were followed by 20,000 fans to Wembley but lost 4-1 to Morpeth.

Last season Hereford were playing Salisbury again, this time in Division 1 South West of the Southern League.

Again there was no stopping Mills, or the Bulls - he fired 47 goals in all competitions as Hereford romped to a second successive title.

They won 33 of their 42 games - losing only once, 2-1 at home to Taunton - and scored 108 league goals. Their 107-point tally was 18 more than runners-up Salisbury.

This season, they have again started well as they seek a hat-trick of promotions which would take them into the sixth tier of English football.

Mills has so far netted eight times in the league - including two penalties - as Hereford have won six of their nine Evo-Stik matches.

A further six goals have followed in just three FA Cup ties.

Mills belted a hat-trick in an 8-0 home win over Godalming in a first qualifying round tie, followed by two more in a 5-2 win against Kempston Rovers.

His 14th goal of what appears to be another prolific season followed in a 2-0 third qualifying round win against Hornchurch

Hereford's great FA Cup wins

Eastleigh's forthcoming FA Cup opponents Hereford enjoy a wonderful place in the tournament's history, writes ELLIOTT BINKS.

The Spitfires will face phoenix club Hereford FC for a place in the first round proper next Saturday.

But it was as Hereford United that the town's football team will forever be remembered.

In 1971/72, as a Southern League club, they pulled off one of the greatest shocks in FA Cup history by knocking out top-flight Newcastle United.

They beat them 2-1 in a third round replay on an Edgar Street mudbath, having previously drawn 2-2 at St. James' Park.

Ronnie Radford's 35-yard screamer remains one of the tournament's most fondly-recalled goals, while Ricky George struck a winner.

It was the first time in 23 years that a Division 1 team had lost a competitive fixture to a non-league outfit.

Two seasons later, Hereford were at it once more.

Now in the third tier of English football, they drew 1-1 with West Ham United in what proved to be Bobby Moore's final game at

Ronnie Radford and Ricky George after beating Newcastle in 1972.

Upton Park.

Again, Hereford won 2-1 at home in the replay - in front of a crowd of 17,423 - to progress to the fourth round. There another massive attendance of 17,491 saw them lose 1-0 to Bristol City.

As a fourth tier club, Hereford held Arsenal 1-1 in a third round draw at Edgar Street in January 1985, in front of 15,777.

Ollie Kearns and Mike Pejic scored for the underdogs in the Highbury replay - but the Gunners netted seven themselves with Paul Mariner and Brian Talbot both grabbing doubles.

In January 1990, Hereford - still in the fourth tier - were drawn at home to Manchester United in a fourth round tie.

A crowd of just under 14,000 saw Clayton Blackmore score the only goal - and United went on to lift the FA Cup, earning a first trophy for Alex Ferguson as manager.

Hereford's last giant-killing came in 2007/08 when, as a League 2 club, they won 1-0 in a first-round replay at League 1 Leeds United.

Lionel Ainsworth scored the only goal, and former Eastleigh defender Dean Beckwith was among the winning Bulls side.

NON LEAGUE

More woe for Warriors

Southampton Warriors' defensive woes go on in Division 3 of the City of Southampton Sunday League.

They have now shipped 47 goals in just four league defeats after a 12-3 home thumping by Test Valley Spartans.

Warriors didn't do an awful lot to help themselves by conceding two goals.

James Hill struck a triple while further goals flowed from Andrew Knight, Bradley Haines, Sam Crabbe, Oliver Sharpe, Craig Renwick, Michael Jayaururi and Darren Friel.

Len Rafferty, Tyler Norris and Kyle Barraclough replied.

At the other end of the table, OTs & Romsey won their fourth game in a row.

They defeated Mayfield Rovers 4-2 with goals from Paul Tanner (2), Brad Piziura and Shane Callaghan. Josh Knight and Connor Bray replied.

Portside defeated AFC Dorchester 4-2 with Scott Sanders (2), Jack Sheppard and Joe Clist on target. Jack Wyatt and Aaron Heskins replied.

Pacesetters

Hedge End Athletic are the pacesetters in Division 2 after a third straight success.

This time they caned visiting Marchwood Rovers 5-0 with goals from Dan Turner (2), Andy Bauck, Gav Cross and Aaston England.

Tom's treble

Athletico Romsey are top of Division 4 on goal difference after thrashing Sholing Monks 7-1.

Tom Munday was a hat-trick hero with Ollie Burroughs, Elliot Moody, Wayne Webster and an own goal also netting. Pete Munday replied for Sholing, who were 3-0 down at half-time.

Tokyo are level on points with Athletico after a 4-2 win at Forest Home.

Tom Goodrich, Tim Grounsell and Steven Abbey were among their marksmen, with Johnny Phillips twice replying - including a penalty.

Romsey Comrades defeated AFC Stoneham 2-1 through James Needle and Nick Whit. Daju Moisa replied.

Nomansland stage impressive comeback

R.S. Nomansland Reserves staged an impressive comeback to progress to the second round of the Southampton FA Sunday Junior B Cup.

They trailed 3-1 to AFC Mayflower Reserves at half-time, but hit back to draw 4-4 and then won 4-3 on penalties.

Matt Evans, Jamie Curtis and Ollie Betts (2) were the men who orchestrated the recovery act, with Daryl Wong, Alexander Fleat (2) and Russell Carey on target for Mayflower.

James Carter, Curtis, Stuart Weetman and Betts were then successful from 12 yards for Nomansland.

Lewis Rogers grabbed the only goal as Whiteheart United defeated Wilton Wanderers.

There was no luck either for AFC Mayflower's first team in cup action.

They hosted Riverside Rangers in the first round of the Charlie Godden Trophy - and were beaten 4-2.

Wayne Given, Lewis Arpels, Andy Chamberlain and Josh Osman saw Riverside progress, with Connor Brown and Callum Wookey replying.

Adam Finch and Connor Reed struck as Netley Spitfire defeated Otter SFC 2-0.

● Dan Harket-Burgess struck a first half hat-trick as Boyatt Wood moved up to second in the Senior Division of the City of Southampton Sunday League.

All his goals came in the first half as Wood triumphed 3-2 against Clock Inn.

RS Nomansland were another team to do all their scoring in the first 45 minutes.

They struck five times at Durley through Ben Dawkins (2), Billy Wales, Akbar Shah and Micky McAleer.

● Division 1 leaders Hunters Inn extended their lead at the top to five points after a fourth successive victory.

Bob Pearce (2), Harry Draycott (2) and Dan Hansford were on target in a 5-1 home win over Bitterne Ducks. An own goal replied.

Gift Ngubane (2) and David Kyle netted as Eastpoint triumphed 3-2 at King George. Josh Daley twice replied.

'Cheeky chap' a breath of fresh air

Wendy Gee

YOUNG Charlie Wagstaffe has made quite an impression since breaking into the first team at Hamble Club.

The 19-year-old midfielder has taken Sydenhams Premier football confidently in his stride since stepping up from the reserves – so much so that he scooped 50 per cent of the votes to take the club's September player-of-the-month award.

Surrounded by seasoned Wessex players, he looked good at table-topping Blackfield & Langley last week where a 1-1 draw ended the Watersiders' 100 per cent start to the league campaign.

"We had some lads out injured, but you deal with what you've got and young Charlie had another fantastic game," said Hamble boss Ben Kneller.

"He'd been in our reserves for the last 18 months and he's been brilliant since he came in.

"He's a big lad with a lovely head of hair on him and he's a good-looking chap," Kneller laughed.

"But he gets stuck into tackles and he's quite a cheeky chap. He's been a breath of fresh air for us.

"Him and young Jack Barnes have brought the average age of the team down."

Having romped Sydenhams One last season, Hamble are learning as they go along in the Wessex top flight.

"The first part of the season we went quite direct, but now we're moving the ball very well," said Kneller.

Ben Kneller and, inset, Charlie Wagstaffe.

"As Chris (Castle, assistant manager) said, most of the league will expect us to beat the bottom-half teams on our day.

"But for people to really take us seriously, we're going to have to beat some of the better sides."

Blackfield certainly fall into that elite bracket and Kneller was proud of his merry Monks for the way they competed with them.

He said: "Late on they hit the bar and we had one cleared off the line. But a point each was fair. Either side would have been a bit gutted had the other one nicked it.

"We defended well, but we weren't defending for our lives. We went toe-to-toe with Blackfield and attacked them when we could.

"They use their pitch very well and they stretch you, but it wasn't a surprise to us to get a good result.

"We went there to try and win.

"We're learning quickly in this league and we've got better as the season's progressed.

"The lads are all enjoying it. We're smiling as we go along."

Hamble Club kept the feel-good factor flowing on Tuesday with a 4-1 Southampton Senior Cup win over Southampton University. Mo Nyang and James Thomson netted a brace apiece.

NON LEAGUE

Action from Peter Symonds v Barton Peveril (green).

Jack Middleton, left, and Ollie Chambers. Pix by Stuart Martin.

Max grabs winner in thrilling derby

Mike **Vimpany**

Peter Symonds bounced back from an early season defeat by Itchen to end Barton Peveril's unbeaten start in the Hampshire College League.

And then, courtesy of a fine win over Sparsholt, they progressed to the second round of the English Schools' FA Under-18 Trophy.

They inflicted Barton Peveril's first defeat with a roller-coaster 3-2 victory in midweek – a perfect result coming quickly on the back of the Jo Sutherden inspired 1-0 ESFA Cup success against Sparsholt.

Its sent confidence soaring in the PSC camp ahead of Monday's ESFA Under-18 Trophy tie against Henley (1.30) and Farnborough's trip there in the Peter Munro Cup two days later.

Coach Rob Kitley praised Peter Symonds for a 'character laced' performance against Barton Peveril, who wiped out a two-goal deficit and almost snatched victory themselves before Max Cullen grabbed a late PSC winner.

The long established derby between two of the county's old 'grammar' schools was eminently watchable – such a shame it was played on such a poor and unkempt Bereweeke Avenue surface, which did neither side any favours.

PSC were looking good 2-0 up on the back of goals by Eddie Lloyd and Lewis Wakeford, but Matt Rickman's rasping 40-yard drive just before half-time put BP right back in it.

Rickman repeated the dose, finishing off a fine move set up by substitute Harry Wright, soon after half-time to make it 2-2.

His equaliser lit the fuse for an exciting second period, with eye-catching duo Cullen and Wright going close before Harry Prisk had a potential BP winner flagged offside.

A defensive error, partly caused by the poor playing surface, played its part in Symonds' late winner – a woeful back pass leaving keeper Dan Jones stranded and giving Cullen the opportunity to nip in and win it 3-2h.

Peter Symonds' match-winner Max Cullum, left, and Barton defender George Ockwell (right, green)

As a token of consolation, BP won the second team Championship match 5-2.

Farnborough, whose ESFA U18 Trophy defence begins at Richmond on Monday, warmed up for their two cup ties with a 7-1 mauling of promoted Poole Grammar.

Boro', looking to build on last season's national cup triumph, netted through Limbu, Fleet, Leatherdalde, Horton, Bushell, Billingham and Mahoney.

They could be a real threat in the College League this season.

At least Richard Taunton's now have a win on the board – their 1-0 victory over Andover being down to Reshaine Dandridge, who slotted home nicely in a 'one-on-one' with the visitors' keeper after an Efu Kazadi flick on.

"We looked good in the first half, but were hanging on for the last ten minutes," confessed RTC coach Tom Barge.

In the Championship, Farnborough ran up another seven against Brockenhurst through Goude (3), Illingworth, Stone, Brown, and Humphrey.

Next week's fixtures –
Monday (1.30):
ESFA Under-18 Colleges Trophy: Peter Symonds v Henley, Richmond v Farnborough.
Wednesday (2)
Peter Munro Cup first round: Barton Peveril v Richard Tauntons, Farnborough II v Peter Symonds II, Itchen v Baton Peveril I, Peter Symonds v Farnnborough, Poole Grammar v Brockenhurst, Portsmouth v Andover, Queen Mary's v Havant/Southdowns.

Bright side of life ...

James Bright struck a hat-trick as Chandlers Ford Athletic defeated Hedge End Club 5-2 in Division 5 of the City of Southampton Sunday League.

Nathan Roles and Lee Farrant-Poole also scored, with Paul Huck twice replying.

Dan Bruce and Josh Powell were on target as Dingle Rovers defeated Sporting Compass 2-1. Neil Curran replied.

7th heaven

Unity 101 remain top of Division 6 after romping to a 7-2 home win over Park Gate Rangers.

They had seven different scorers as well - Joe Pilgrim, Nas Brorer, Shazur Rahman, Adham Majid, Hassan Ahmady, Tom Gilham and Azhar Ahmed.

Park Gate, who trailed 5-0 at the break, replied through Aiden Martin and Jamie Forder.

Hamwic Rovers beat Linden Tree 3-1 through Pawel Burdzy (2) and Robert Bubula. Archie Fitzgerald replied.

● A Strong (2) and M Blissett were among the scorers as AFC Itchen Reserves won 4-2 at M & T in the only Division 7 game played. Neil Wyatt and Daniel Norris replied.

Infinity miss chance

INFINITY missed the chance to take over top spot in the Hampshire Premier League on Tuesday when they lost 4-2 at Hayling.

Elliott Sills (2), Joe Christmas and Liam Jeram inflicted a second league loss in eight games on Infinity, who replied through Macauley Smith and James Fry.

The following night, leaders Paulsgrove took full advantage of Infinity's slip up by beating Locks Heath 2-1.

Aaron Fennemore and James Hird were on target as the Portsmouth club stretched their lead to four points, though Infinity have a game in hand.

One downside for Paulsgrove, though, was a red card for nine-goal leading marksman Alex Miroy.

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Long badly needs a goal

Martin O'Neill celebrated agreeing an extended stay as Republic of Ireland manager by watching his team ensure their World Cup qualification bid will go down to the wire in Wales.

Friday's 2-0 victory over Moldova means Ireland remain in the thick of a three-way battle for a top-two finish in Group D.

Here, the Sports Pink takes a look at what we learned from the clash with Moldova.

1. Old can still be gold

It is an often repeated refrain in Irish football circles that Wes Hoolahan is not the future of the national team, and at 35 that is undeniable. But as the Norwich schemer demonstrated once again, he is very much the present and continues to provide much of the inspiration for a team which lacks incision without him. He was aided and abetted by 34-year-old striker Daryl Murphy, whose second and third senior international goals could hardly have been better timed.

2. Reinforcements are on the way

O'Neill has made no secret of his admiration for 22-year-old Bristol City winger Callum O'Dowda, but the decision to hand him a first competitive start still raised eyebrows. O'Dowda did not disappoint as he took the game to admittedly limited opposition to suggest he will have more

Shane Long.

opportunities to pull on the green jersey.

3. Darren Randolph is as important as his team-mates at the other end

The Middlesbrough man did not have a great deal to do against Moldova, but had he not clawed Sergiu Platica's stinging volley away from his top corner six minutes after Murphy had made it 2-0, the atmosphere might have changed significantly.

4. Shane Long needs a goal

The Saints striker last found the back of the net on February 11 as the Saints won 4-0 at Sunderland in the Premier League, and has since gone 24 games for club and country without a goal. He might have claimed a hat-trick against Moldova, but with confidence low he side-footed one effort inches wide, thumped another straight at keeper Ilie Cebanu and steered a third past the post when it looked easier to score.

5. Timing is everything

Ireland's campaign has seen peaks and troughs. November's 1-0 win in Austria took their points tally to 10 from a possible 12, but it was followed by a run of three costly draws. Last month's home defeat by Serbia dented spirits further, but the manner of victory over the Moldovans has allowed the nation to dream once again.

SAINTS

Tough times for

Peter **Howard**

YOU would have been forgiven for letting the Checktrade Trophy fixtures pass you by this week.

In terms of interest, this tournament can barely raise a cursory glance from most supporters.

Just 480 people turned up to watch Saints win at Cambridge United's Cambs Glass Stadium this week in their second group stage game.

It's little surprise, though, considering the tournament's issues and controversies since it's reformatting at the beginning of last season.

Most fans of League One and Two clubs would consider it a badge of honour not to turn up to these games and shove two fingers up to the Football League's changes to the competition, which has seen Premier League academy teams invited to play.

It's actual structure is bizarre, too.

Saints find themselves in a southern regional group, but will have travelled to Peterborough, Cambridge and Northampton by the close of the group stages.

It's hardly regional when by the time the group stages are done, Saints would have travelled some 800 miles all in.

Not exactly the local trips that League One and Two clubs will have wanted to minimise exertion in this competition while they battle for what ever targets in their respective leagues, especially when they are forced by the rules to play first-string players.

The group stages also include a bonus point format, which can be won via a penalty shootout when a game is all-square at full-time.

It's this type of bizarre ruling that has made the Checkatrade Trophy a strange breed.

It hasn't helped either that bosses of Football League clubs have to try and live up to the EFL's 'full strength available' rule, meaning they can't just pick who they want and if they do they risk being fined.

In the regulations for the Checkatrade Trophy, the EFL state: "Each EFL Club shall play its full available strength in and during all Matches.

"The League will from time to time issue a policy as to what constitutes 'full available strength'.

"Any Club failing to meet this requirement will be required to pay a fine of up to £5,000."

All that and more has made the Checkatrade Trophy a bit of a farce overall.

But Saints know the value of this strange competition.

They are aware that giving their young players a rare opportunity to play against grizzled Football League players will only help their development.

You cast an eye upwards to the first team and for the first time in a long time there's no obvious players coming through from the academy.

James Ward-Prowse is the nearest Saints are to an academy man in the first team and he's not played for Mauricio Pellegrino's side much this campaign.

Then there's Matt Targett and Sam McQueen, both of whom are around the first-team and now too old to be considered prospects for the future.

But neither are near a first-team breakthrough.

Josh Sims was a bright spark last season, while Jake Hesketh also had a few good moments - especially against Crystal Palace in the League Cup.

But that pair are still working back to full fitness after injury and would be lucky to get a first-team run out this season, considering how few and far between the games are currently and with the club battling on one front until the new year.

Without the increased games of a Europa League campaign, or even a cup run at this point, Saints' first-team is just a pipe dream for many of the youngsters.

You have got a number of them in and around training with the first team but the actual prospect of getting games there is pretty unlikely at this stage.

So you've actually got a contingent of players who are just twiddling their thumbs and not actually playing any football at all.

Saints have been all too aware

SAINTS

Saints' academy

Saints celebrate Alfie Jones' winner at Cambridge. Right - match action from the Checkatrade Trophy. Pictures courtesy Southampton FC.

that they needed to give some of their academy graduates first-team football, and just leaving them to play football in the academy bubble has only limited benefit.

Instead, they've sent many young players on loan to Football League and Scottish clubs.

Harrison Reed, who has seemingly forever been around the academy and on the fringes of the first-team without a real breakthrough, has gone to Championship side Norwich for the season.

At Carrow Road, he is now in at the deep end and getting experience where he wouldn't be at Saints.

The same can be said for Ryan Seager at League One MK Dons, Olufela Olomola at fourth tier Yeovil Town and Sam Gallagher at Championship outfit Birmingham City.

Harry Lewis, the 19-year-old goalkeeper, is at Dundee United in Scotland, while even first-team man Jordy Clasie has had to be shipped out for games at Club Brugge, although he's not started a game yet in Belgium and played just 30 minutes of football overall.

So there's really a build up of academy men, on long contracts at that, who are at the club but not even playing and won't get the chance to play, either, unless there's drastic injuries.

There's not even a chance for them to prove themselves on any first-team stage at the moment and is likely among the reasons why there's little coming through the academy at this moment in time.

Jack Stephens has been an exception to that, but despite his impressive displays last season he has not been able to keep his place, with the club bringing in Wesley Hoedt, a £15m signing from Lazio, and keeping Virgil van Dijk at St Mary's.

So a club that has always boasted of its successful academy, won't even keep a player, who has shown quality in the chance he has got, in the starting line-up.

But they've instead bought £15m on an alternative centre-back and forced Van Dijk to stay, despite his desire to leave.

That's a bit of a shame for Stephens and the philosophy of the club.

It's not exactly the message Saints would want to send to their young prospects, surely? What would that do to your motivation as a young player? It's not exactly the 'if you're good enough, you'll get your chance' attitude.

Stephens, who has been at the club since he was 16 and gone on loan to Swindon, Middlesbrough and Coventry to help his development, has worked hard for his place and deserves better than being cast aside like this, especially for players clearly not as committed to the cause as he has been.

With the pathway to the first-team filled with more obstacles than ever, it increases the value of the Checkatrade Trophy in many ways.

Playing in the competition against experienced Football League players is the perfect introduction to the more physical world away from the academy bubble.

If these players are to stand any chances of making it through the ranks then getting used to the hard knocks will only increase their chances of making it.

There were good signs against Cambridge.

There was some opinion that in their first outing against Peterborough United, they were bullied against League One opposition.

However, in this one, the under-21s recovered from some early jitters and really grew into it.

The first half saw Callum Slattery at the heart of the action for Saints, the attacking midfielder playing in the hole whole behind the striker made the team tick and kept his side moving.

The 18-year-old was at the heart of Saints' goal and the winner by Alfie Jones on 36 minutes.

It was his corner that found the Saints captain to head home for the lead.

After that Saints demonstrated real grit and determination to get this result over the line.

Cambridge went for it in the second half, but Saints stood firm impressively.

They now head in to the final game against group leaders Northampton Town with a chance to reach to the knockout stages for a second successive season on November 7.

Checkatrade Trophy crowds feature - see page 46.

So, who are Slovenia?

Scotland will look to seal a World Cup play-off spot when they take on Slovenia on Sunday.

Here, the Sports Pink takes a look at the team standing in the way of Gordon Strachan and his side.

FORM

Slovenia's hopes of reaching the play-offs are all but over after Thursday's defeat to England. Three points adrift of Scotland, a win would see them overtake Strachan's team on goal difference but with Slovakia a point in front and hosting Group F also-rans Malta the odds are they will end up disappointed even if they do triumph this weekend. Of their last five games, though, their only wins have come against the Maltese and Lithuania.

MANAGER

Srecko Katanec is approaching the end of his second spell at the Slovenia helm, having confirmed at Wembley that he will step down after the visit of Scotland. The former Yugoslavia and Slovenia international first took charge in 1998 and proved an unparalleled success, leading his country to Euro 2000 - their first major tournament - and the World Cup two years later. A short-lived stint at Greek giants Olympiacos followed, before a three-year spell as Macedonia manager and two years with the UAE. Katanec was reappointed Slovenia manager in 2013.

Gordon Strachan

TACTICS

Slovenia have already proved they can be awkward customers during this qualifying campaign. It took yet another Scotland late show for Strachan's team to break them down when they met at Hampden back in March, with Chris Martin's 88th-minute winner proving the difference. England were also held to a goalless draw when they visited Ljubljana last year and required a similarly late goal from Harry Kane to grab a 1-0 victory earlier this week. With a win required to keep their faint hopes alive they may, though, dispense with their cautious approach.

PLAYERS

Slovenia suffered further blows at Wembley when Chievo midfielder Valter Birsa and Nantes midfielder Rene Krhin, formerly of Inter Milan, picked up bookings that rule them out against Scotland. Kevin Kampl is also not involved despite being fit. The RB Leipzig player has a tense relationship with those at the top of his country's football association. There are some notable players who are likely to face the Scots, including Atletico Madrid goalkeeper Jan Oblak. FC Ufa's sturdy defender Bojan Jokic and Atalanta attacker Josip Ilicic pose potential threats.

Alan Ball's career

ELLIOTT Binks looks back at Alan Ball's playing career ...

1962/63
Blackpool (5 games, 0 goals)
Made his professional debut in a season-opening 2-1 win at Liverpool. At 17 years, three months and six days, hewas Blackpool's youngest league debutant.

1963/64
Blackpool (31 games, 13 goals)
Finished the season as Blackpool's top goal scorer in the league as they ended the season in 18th place in the top flight
Called up to the England under-23 squad at the end of the campaign.

1964/65
Blackpool (39 games, 11 goals)
Ball scored his first-ever professional hat-trick in the 3-3 draw at Fulham.
Ended up playing seven games for the England under-23s, scoring against Romania and being sent off against Austria.
He was also called up to the senior side for a three-game tour at the end of the season, making his debut in the 1-1 draw against Yugoslavia in May 1965 and scoring his first international goal in the 2-1 win against Sweden.

1965/66—Blackpool (41 games, 16 goals)
Joint-top scorer in the league for

Alan Ball

Blackpool (with Ray Charnley) as the team finished 13th in the top flight
In international competition, Ball began the season back with the under-23s, scoring against France, before becoming a regular member of the senior side
Played seven of the senior side's eight games that season, before being named in the squad for the 1966 World Cup. There, he played in four of England's six games on the way to winning the tournament, including the quarter, the semi and the final itself

1966/67
Everton (41 games, 15 goals)
Signed by Everton for £112,000 in August 1966 - the first-ever six-figure deal between two British clubs
Scored the winner on his debut as Everton beat Fulham 1-0 before hitting two against Liverpool in a 3-1 derby win just seven days later
Eighteen goals in all competitions made him Everton's top scorer as they finished 6th in the top flight

1967/68
Everton (34 games, 20 goals)
Then most prolific season of Ball's entire career with 20 league goals. Scored four in a 6-2 win over West Brom (16/03/68), although Everton would lose to the same opposition in that season's FA Cup final.
Continued on facing page

NOSTALGIA

A career played

Simon Carter

HE will forever be remembered for his role in what remains - all these years on, 51 years of hurt and counting - English football's greatest day.

English sport's greatest day, come to think of it.

Alan Ball was only 21 when Sir Alf Ramsey masterminded our 1966 World Cup final win at Wembley. The youngest member of a squad which gained legendary status overnight.

Therefore, as David Tossell explains in his newly-released biography, Ball's career was thus destined to be played out almost in reverse.

"The natural progression, followed by other team-mates, was to become established in league football, challenge for domestic honours, and achieve crowning glory via the World Cup," Tossell writes. "With the exception of George Cohen, who had served his time loyally at Fulham, all of Ball's Wembley colleagues had already won winners' medals, even if Jack Charlton's had only been in the Second Division. Ball, having earned international football's greatest prize, now had to prove himself in the club game."

We are only into the fourth chapter of Tossell's hugely entertaining biography of a man who holds a unique place in English football - that of being liked by both Saints and Pompey fans - when Ball helps England lift the Jules Rimet Trophy.

We have 16 chapters left, but they all help to paint a fascinating picture of a colourful, passionate character who so many will happily wax lyrical about, but who others will freely admit was a World Cup winning pain in the backside at times.

I'll lay my cards firmly on the table here before we go any further.

I'm an Exeter City fan and I'm a journalist, and in both of those lives I came across Alan Ball.

First, I used to go and watch his Exeter sides most week from the time he took over in the summer of 1991 through to January 1994 when he quit to take over at The Dell.

Secondly, I used to ghost-write his weekly columns for the Southern Daily Echo and the Sports Pink before handing over to my colleague Simon Walter.

By the time I started interviewing Bally for his columns, I knew full well the sort of character I was going to be regularly talking to.

On a few occasions, a group of Exeter-supporting friends and I had got chatting to him after a City game in the early 1990s in the sponsors' lounge. He was quick to buy us all a drink - how many Football League managers would do that, I wondered, let alone someone with his standing in the sport?

A friend of mine sometimes went and watched the Exeter youth team play on a Sunday morning. There, without fail, he would bump into Bally, kickstarting a chain of events which would lead to my mate being invited to the pub afterwards and then onto Bally's house to continue the football chat.

Now, how many Football League managers would do THAT?

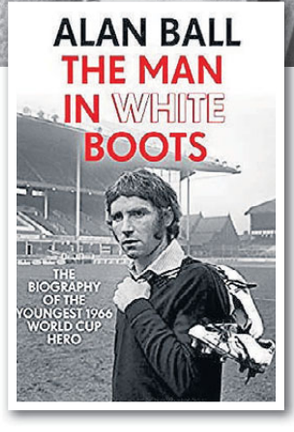
And I repeat, let alone someone with his standing in the sport. A truly iconic figure who had helped England win the biggest prize of all.

Alan Ball wasn't everyone's cup of tea when he was unveiled as Exeter's manager, but he gradually won most doubters over through a combination of his legendary passion and a team who served up some great entertainment.

At times a team who conceded

Alan Ball helps Lawrie McMenemy unveil Kevin Keegan in February 1980.

Flashback - Alan Ball in an England shirt in the mid 1960s.



NOSTALGIA

out in reverse

Main pic - Alan Ball and Lawrie McMenemy celebrate after Saints had reached thee 1979 League Cup final.
Above - the greatest day. Alan Ball on a lap of honour after England's 1966 World Cup final win.
Below - back in the England coaching fold in 1992, with Graham Taylor, McMenemy and a young Alan Shearer.

goals almost at will, but on other occasions a team who delighted going forward. A microcosm of Ball's managerial career, in a way.

I wouldn't say I loved watching Ball's Exeter play - we lost more than we won, and twice escaped relegation on the final day of a third division season - but I did love talking football with him.

I certainly wasn't alone in that.

Just a few weeks after winning the World Cup as a Blackpool player - he joined them after Bolton famously turned him down for being too small - Ball moved down the Lancashire coast to sign for Everton.

There he would enjoy the best days of his club career, forming part of a midfield trio alongside Howard Kendall and Colin Harvey that Toffees followers still describe as a 'Holy Trinity' which helped the club win the Division 1 title in 1970.

And it was during his time on Merseyside that Ball took to wearing what Tossell describes as "those beautiful white boots."

Even though the club had then suffered a post-championship winning hangover the following season, the English footballing world was stunned when, just before Christmas 1971, Ball was sold to Arsenal for a then British record £220,000.

"Not a single newspaper had offered any speculation about a transfer that was about to leave its subject as bemused as anyone," Tossell writes.

In a way, Ball would never get over the sadness he suffered at having to leave Goodison Park.

Kenny Swain, who played for Ball during his first spell as Pompey boss in the mid-1980s, said: "Even when he finished playing, the real love of his career was not Arsenal or Southampton, or even England. It was Everton."

Ball himself later admitted: "That goodbye to Goodison really turned me over. It wasn't easy. In a way it was hell. I'd always had it in my mind that when I left Everton they would have to push me out in a wheelchair."

Ball's son, Jimmy, also told Tossell: "Dad used to say 'I loved playing in front of them (the Everton fans), loved that patch of grass. He wanted his ashes scattered on the pitch, but all we could do was lay a wreath and hope he was happy with that. It was a special time in his wonderful career, he was in his pomp. People who were there say no one will ever compare. People younger than me tell me he was their dad's hero. They talk about him like he was a God. It is very humbling and very emotional."

Two words which some up Alan Ball to those who knew him.

He could be a very humble person, and a very emotional one too.

Tossell's book works because it brings out every detail of Ball's character - his weaknesses, his flaws, as well as everything which was good about him. He speaks to former colleagues who showered him with praise, and others who remembered the times Ball's legendary passion got the better of him.

The author attempts to find out why Ball - one of his country's greatest players - never really hit the heights as a manager.

Indeed, his most successful time was at Fratton Park in his second managerial role which he took on in the summer of 1984.

(A sentimental return to Blackpool as player-boss in 1980 saw him sacked before the season was over, upon which he returned to Saints for a second playing spell.)

Ball's great friend and ex-Saints boss Lawrie McMenemy is quoted in the book regarding his philosophy of needing to marry 'violinists' and 'roadsweepers' together to create a perfect footballing balance.

Rascals, says McMenemy, are fine. Villains, he would never have bought.

Well, Ball certainly had some rascals in his first spell as Portsmouth manager. Some would say he wasn't short of villains either, but after two near misses he oversaw promotion to the top flight at the end of 1986/87.

Financial problems - not helped by Pompey bizarrely acquiring a basketball club - didn't help Ball's cause as he suffered an immediate relegation 12 months later.

Continued on page 26

Alan Ball's career

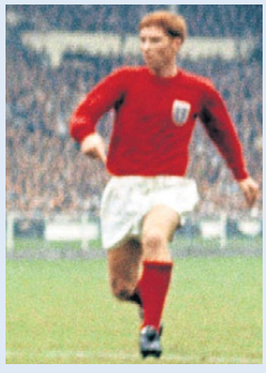
from facing page

1968/69
Everton (40 games, 16 goals)
Another hat-trick against West Brom, this time at home in a 4-0 win.

1969/70
Everton (37 games, 10 goals)
Helped Everton win the Division 1 title.
Played all four of his country's games at the 1970 World Cup as England were eliminated by West Germany in the quarter-finals

1970/71
Everton (39 games, 2 goals)
Just two league goals all season as the champions slipped to a 14th place finish
Better form in other competitions though—three goals in the FA Cup as Everton were knocked out in the semi-finals, as well as a hat-trick in a 6-2 European Cup win over Keflavik of Iceland.

1971/72
Everton (17 games, 3 goals), Arsenal (18 games, 3 goals)
Didn't score for Everton until late October, but then managed three in five games—including one against Saintswhich proved to be his final goal for Everton
Sold to reigning champions Arsenal for another record fee of £220,000 on 22 December 1971



Alan Ball

having hit 66 goals in 208 appearances for Everton
Scored the winner in the FA Cup quarter-final at Leyton Orient but Arsenal ultimately went on to lose 1-0 to Leeds United in the final.

1972/73
Arsenal (40 games, 10 goals)
Scored in a 2-0 win at Anfield (10/02/73) against the champions-elect
Sent off for England against Poland in June 1973.

1973/74
Arsenal (36 games, 13 goals)
Ball's most prolific season for Arsenal, in which he took on the club's captaincy
Broke his leg in a challenge with QPR's Terry Venables in the final game of the season

1974/75
Arsenal (30 games, 9 goals)
Missed the start of the campaign due to a broken leg.
He and Bob McNab were sent off in a 2-1 defeat at Derby and Ball was upset when the club refused to back his appeal, leading to him requesting a transfer.

1975/76
Arsenal (39 games, 9 goals)
Ended his England career with eight goals in 72 games.
Continued on page 28

Recharging footballing batteries

from page 25

His subsequent spell at Stoke was a nightmare, pure and simple, and one that Potter fans would never let him forget - witness some chucking hot tea at Ball when he was in charge of Exeter two years later.

Nevertheless, his time in Devon helped recharge Ball's footballing batteries and he (unsurprisingly) jumped at the chance to be reunited again with director of football McMenemy following Ian Branfoot's sacking.

Famously, Ball's arrival coincided with Matt Le Tissier's return to top form.

A successful relegation battle ensued, and in 1994/95 Ball led Saints to a 10th place finish - at the time the club's highest of the Premier League era.

That was followed, though, by Ball walking out on Saints to take over at Manchester City, whose chairman was his former England colleague Francis Lee.

Though City were paying him a lot more, friends and family believe Ball would have stayed at The Dell but was unhappy that chairman Guy Askham had given Lee permission to speak to him.

It would prove to be a fateful move for Ball, whose City were relegated

Alan Ball

on the final day of the 1995/96 season - with Saints staying up at their expense.

Sacked by City later that year, Ball was to return to the south coast again for what proved to be his last managerial job - a second stint at Fratton Park.

That, too, ended with the sack.

Tossell summed up: "His record as a manager amounts to this - a mix of clubs, a mix of divisions, a mix of achievement and failure. A journeyman, if you like, and there is nothing wrong what that. Unless you have conquered the world as a player. Unless your triumphs on the field are the yardstick against which your future efforts are gauged."

The author went on. "If good players needed extra belief and motivation, Ball could deliver; if what you needed was an intricate game-plan you might have wanted to look elsewhere.

"'This is my analogy' Steve Claridge offers. 'If you were in a trench and you had 300 people against 300,000 and he was with you, that is a perfect situation for him. If he had 300,000 people and was attacking 300 he wouldn't know what to do. He was very good at rousing people, working on emotion. He had the personality and love of the game to be a coach, but as a manager, absolutely not."

NOSTALGIA

'Why Saints were

The Sports Pink has teamed up with publishers Hodder & Stoughton to bring you an exclusive extract from David Tossell's biography of the former Saints player and manager 'Alan Ball - The Man in White Boots'.

In it, we look at the time when Ball left Arsenal to sign for then Second Division club Saints in December 1976 ...

*

THE desk from which Mick Channon plans his assaults on racing's top prizes sits at one end of a modern, wooden-floored space that serves both as the administration hub of West Ilsley Stables and a visitors' reception.

On the book shelves in the waiting area, stallion guides share space with vintage football books and a selection of biographies.

Trophies and photographs adorn window ledges and furniture tops, while a flat-screen television shows Sky Sports News. At the business end, the far wall is dominated by a single mounted black and white photograph. Not

of Channon in top hat and tails celebrating a Royal Ascot victory, nor of any of the Group One winners that he has

produced during his post-football career as one of Britain's leading trainers. It is of two men, wearing Southampton shirts, laughing together on the football field. As Channon studies bloodstock sales reports and plots the training programmes and racing schedules of the 120 horses in his charge on the west Berkshire downs, it is Alan Ball who smiles down upon him.

'I miss him,' says Channon, glancing up at the image of him and his friend while he waits for a group of two-year-olds to return from the gallops. 'He still makes me smile. Things happen and you realise that he would have cracked a joke or taken the piss. Little things crop up every day

Alan Ball receives the Daily Echo Saints player of the year trophy in 1978.

Above - Alan Ball returns to The Dell as Saints manager in January 1994, alongside Lawrie McMenemy.

and you think, "Bally would have made something of that."

"He loved life, loved a drink and loved a bet. I can't speak highly enough of him. You could be down, and he would come in and tell you a story or tell you a joke to brighten you up. He was a breath of fresh air.'

Ball's transfer to Southampton in December 1976 was an opportunity to cement a friendship that had been forged in the England dressing room and had developed over a mutual interest in horses and nights out. 'What you saw was what you got with Alan; he was lively and bubbly,' continues Channon, who was unsurprised to see Ball dropping down a division to join him at The Dell.

'It didn't matter to Alan. All he ever wanted to do was play football.

"He didn't give a s**t if he was playing in a red shirt, blue shirt or green shirt. He wanted to play, or coach or train kids. I saw him when he was mobile and active and a top player – great touch, great vision, almost a complete player.

"But Southampton was perfect

NOSTALGIA

perfect for Bally'

Well done - Alan Ball and Lawrie McMenemy, above, after Saints had clinched promotion back to the top flight in 1978.

for him at his age. He'd lost half a yard of pace, but he had a quick brain and got even sharper and cuter when he got older. The first yard was in his head.'

For the third time in his career, Ball had been signed by the FA Cup holders. As at Arsenal, he had missed the deadline for the European quarter-finals and would have to watch as his new team went down narrowly over two legs to holders Anderlecht in the Cup Winners' Cup.

It was promotion, however, for which he had been acquired, although when he made his debut at Plymouth Argyle, as captain, the Saints were in 15th place and closer to relegation.

'Lawrie McMenemy brought in some players you would never have thought you would see there,' says David Peach, left-back in the victorious Wembley team. 'The First Division was our target. We'd got relegated and the Cup put a shine on it so the hurt wasn't so bad, but Alan was what we needed. He was a great leader.'

Even with Ball in the team, Southampton would fall a further three places during his first few weeks, but a 3–0 win in an FA Cup replay at Chelsea had off ered promise of improvement to come and they leapt up to 12th with a 6–0 win at Carlisle United, the kind of scoreline that one might have expected more frequently with an all-star front three of Channon, Ted MacDougall and Peter Osgood. It marked the beginning of a run of 11 League games in which they were beaten only once, helping them towards a final placing of ninth and inspiring optimism about the following season.

Ball had scored his first Southampton goal in a 3–3 draw against Nottingham Forest in the FA Cup, but only one strike in 23 League games indicated the deeper role he was taking on the field. Even though he had continued to achieve double figures pretty much every season while at Arsenal, goals were not what he had been signed for.

Enjoying the 'carte blanche to run the middle of the park', Ball had also been instructed by McMenemy to seize control of a dressing room that featured what Ball described as a collection of 'footballers, mimics, know-alls and whimsies'. McMenemy admitted that the likes of Osgood, Jim McCalliog and Jim Steele enjoyed socialising and, even though Ball matched their love of a night out, the manager felt

he could rely on his new leader to demonstrate when it was time to go to work.

'There were some good names there that he knew and then there were some young 'uns,' McMenemy continues.

'He was an inspiration to the youngsters, he settled straight in and the crowd loved him.

"As I got to know Alan, he was the most likeable fellow; he loved life, he loved football and he was a big family man.

Continued on page 28

from facing page

With his footballing life over - in terms of working in the game - Ball could now look forward to a happy retirement.

Sadly, it never came.

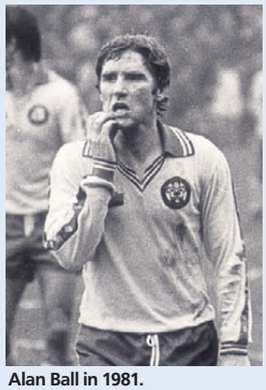
The loss of his beloved wife Lesley through cancer in May 2004 was a hammer blow from which he struggled to recover, a painful chapter of his life which makes for tough reading when recalled by his children.

Then, just as Ball was beginning to get his life back on track, tragedy again struck on the evening of April 24, 2007. Attempting to put out a bonfire in his back garden - the embers of which had suddenly reignited - Alan Ball, World Cup winner and national hero, died of a heart attack.

He was just 61.

His funeral was subsequently held at Winchester Cathedral and attracted a 'who's who' of footballing stars, past and present, and fans from the clubs who had watched him play and manage.

Apart from Stoke and Manchester City, it seemed most people who had come



Alan Ball in 1981.

into contact with Alan Ball took him to their hearts.

As a result, to those who knew him well, the last decade has not been easy as family and friends carry on their lives in his absence.

This book is a timely reminder of the sort of man Alan Ball was.

As the author signs off, "Few in football can point to a contribution such as Ball's. He will forever be part of an achievement that hastened his nation's awakening to the fact that the sport could be a communal, unifying event, in the manner of coronations and conclusions of wars ... Alan Ball remains a part of our national sport and our national history, his spirit and legacy as bright as those white boots."

A fascinating read, and a must for all Saints fans this Christmas-time.

● ***'Alan Ball - The Man in White Boots' is published by Hodder & Stoughton. RRP £20.***

Bally's career

From page 25

1976/77
Arsenal (14 games, 1 goal) and Saints (23 games, 1 goal)
Arsenal began the season with a new manager—Terry Neill—who was keen to take the team in a new direction and ultimately that led to Ball leaving
Signed for Saints for £60,000 in December 1976
First league goal for Saints was a winner against Luton Town.

1977/78
Saints (41 games, 5 goals), Philadelphia Fury (25 games, 5 goals)
Scores on the opening day of the season against Brighton to rescue a point in a 1-1 draw. Eventually skippers Saints to automatic promotion as runners-up behind Bolton.
In May, goes on loan to Philadelphia Fury in the North American Soccer League, where he becomes player-manager after just one month

1978/79
Saints (42 games, 2 goals), Philadelphia Fury (8 games, 0 goals), Vancouver Whitecaps (15 games, 8 goals)
Ever present in the league as Saints finish 14th in the top flight. They are also runners-up in the League Cup (again losing to Leeds) and quarter-finalists in the FA Cup

Alan Ball, 1978.

This time, part of his summer is spent at Philadelphia Fury before he joins Vancouver Whitecaps in June 1979, mid-way through the NASL season. Vancouver go onto win the 1979 Soccer Bowl, with Ball winning Man of the Match in the final.

1979/80
Saints (26 games, 1 goal), Vancouver (16 games, 2 goals)
Ball's only league goal of the season comes in the 4-1 home win over Manchester City.
Midway through the season, announces he'll become player-manager at Blackpool, but not before completing his scheduled summer stint back at Vancouver .

1980/81
Blackpool (30 games, 5 goals), Saints 10 games, 0 goals)
Won just seven of his 34 games in charge of Blackpool and is sacked in February 1981.
Lawrie McMenemy offers Ball the chance to return to Saints and he re-signs in early March, playing all 10 of the club's remaining games as they finish 6th in the top flight

1981/82
Saints (41 games, 1 goal)
Sole league goal of the season comes in the 5-5 draw at home to Coventry.
Continued on facing page

NOSTALGIA

Bally 'gave you

from page 27

"He liked a night out – he was of that era – and one day Bally looked at Lew Chatterley, our trainer, and said, "Lew, Wimpey's couldn't lift me today." But the minute his feet touched the grass he lit up. That was him all over. If you have a World Cup winner of his age doing it, then nobody in the club can give you less than 100 per cent.'

McMenemy turned the signing of experienced internationals into something of a trademark in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Names such as Charlie George, Kevin Keegan, Frank Worthington, Dave Watson, Peter Shilton and Mick Mills would all succumb to the manager's charm.

'In the lower divisions you are 90 per cent a coach and 10 per cent a manager, because you don't have the players,' he explains. 'Higher up, you had the players and you also had all those internationals, most of whom I got cheap because they were on their last legs. The common denominator with all of them, I would say – without insulting them – is that they were rascals. They had been around the world and played international football, but they needed managing. I loved that. They didn't need coaching, so now I was 90 per cent a manager.'

Ball quickly recognised that McMenemy was intuitive enough to discern which players among that 'mix of youngsters and strong-willed veterans' needed a firm hand and which were better off given greater rein to their personalities.

Training at Southampton was conducted on public common land by the county cricket ground

rather than the purpose-built complexes Ball had been used to at Everton and Arsenal. If the balls were lost, the players would run back down the road to The Dell. Older players such as Ball, Osgood and MacDougall were given leeway to take days off .

'Pressure was on us because Lawrie had to prove that signing these players wasn't just for fun,' says Peach. 'But he was a great man manager and he got respect from those players. Players like Osgood and Ball came, a bit of devilment in them, and they just needed a little bit of slack that they probably didn't get in other places. He gave them that and they would cross rivers for him.'

McMenemy continues, 'Alan fitted into that category of players who needed managing. One morning, the trainer warned me they'd all brought their suits and ties. I told him to get me a paper and I looked in it and saw Newbury's first race was 1.45. They were all waiting for me at the training ground so I said, "What a wonderful day.

The weather is fantastic. Aren't we lucky to be out here instead of at the docks or down the mines? It makes you want to be out here all day." Bally and his pals are looking at each other. "Unless we have a good session," I said.

"Well, Brazil couldn't have beaten us that morning.

They kept running by the trainer and saying, "What time is it?"

Eventually I said, "Well done. In you go," and they were in like a flash.

Within minutes Channon, Ossie and Bally drove out with their suits on. I put my hand up and they put the window down and I said to Bally, "Put us a tenner on the first race, will you?" That is what it was all about. They knew I knew. If they ever crossed the line I would bring them up to my office quietly. Some people need a cuddle, some need a kick up the backside. I would have a rascal if he could play, but I wouldn't have a villain if he was the best player in the world.

'All teams are made up of road sweepers and violinists. Every now and again a road sweeper thinks he is a violinist, so you have got to point out that he isn't. And, once in a while you have to remind a violinist that without the road sweepers he wouldn't have the bloody ball. The art of management is getting the balance.'

Ball, who had been one of Alf Ramsey's road sweepers in 1966, was now what McMenemy called his 'master violinist'. He continues, 'I remember one day as he went out I said, "Let's have some one-touch today, Bally." He looked over and said, "Half a touch, do you?"

He could do that; he had peripheral vision. He wanted the ball all the time. You would look at some teams and you would see that a player was not interested, but Alan loved pulling the strings. He loved setting things up.'

Ball duly skippered Saints to promotion from the second tier in his first full season at The Dell, 1977/78. Tossell takes up the story again ...

Asked to assess his contribution to promotion, Ball responded, 'I give a team a lot more balance these days. Instead of charging around all over the place I read the game better and put more thought into it.'

NOSTALGIA

a massive lift'

Jules Rimet still gleaming. Alan Ball sits front row second right with the legendary 1966 England World Cup winning team.

Peach enthuses about Ball's influence, recalling that his mere presence 'gave you a massive lift'. He adds, 'He had that desire and enthusiasm and if there was a problem Alan soon let you know. We would have meetings and it would be sorted. He had achieved everything and he was a great player and his enthusiasm never dwindled. I have sat on team coaches on the way home and – yes, we'd had a couple of drinks – but Alan would be crying as he was talking and trying to help you with your game. He was so passionate.'

Steve Moran also recalls those journeys where 'Bally would sit in the front with Lawrie and have a few whiskies. After an hour or so he would come down the coach and, one by one, would either slaughter you or tell you he loved you. He loved kissing, and breathing whisky fumes all over you.'

MacDougall described Ball as an 'inspirational captain who at times played as if he would get us promoted single-handedly', while McMenemy, asked to identify the most important member of his squad, stated, 'Pound for pound, it has to be Alan Ball. His enthusiasm and dedication are tremendous. I pride myself on the fact that in these days of inflation I've built a First Division team that has only one six figure signing [Phil Boyer].'

Alan Ball: The Man in White Boots: The biography of the youngest 1966 World Cup Hero, by David Tossell, is published by Hodder & Stoughton. RRP £20.

Rock on, Tommy! Mick Channon and Alan Ball take time out to impersonate 1980s comedy act Cannon and Ball.

Alan Ball with his father, Alan Ball senior.

Alan Ball on his wedding day with bride Lesley.

Alan Ball's career ...

from facing page

1982/83

Saints (12 games, 1 goal), Bristol Rovers (17 games, 2 goals)

Starts the first 12 games of the season, scoring in the 3-1 win over West Ham (16/10/82)

At the end of October 1982, he announces his decision to leave Saints again, this time joining Hong Kong side Eastern Athletic for 12 games.

Last Saints match comes on 30 October 1982 in an emotional farewell, fittingly against his former club Everton.

Returns to England to sign for third tier Bristol Rovers in January 1983, where he plays 17 games before retiring from playing.

Alan Ball's managerial career ...

POMPEY

Takes over as Pompey boss in the summer of 1984 and immediately top scorer Mark Hateley is sold to AC Milan. Despite that, guides Pompey to fourth in the second tier in 1984/85 - compared to their 16th placed finish the previous year.

Pompey finish fourth again in 1985/86 - again missing out on automatic promotion by just one place - but it's third time lucky as they finish second in 1986/87.

In their first top flight season since 1958-59, Ball is unable to keep Pompey up.

He is sacked in January 1989 with Pompey 13th in the second tier.

STOKE CITY

Appointed Potters boss in November 1989, Ball is unable to keep the club in the second tier. He is eventually sacked in February 1991 after a 4-0 loss at Wigan.

EXETER

Appointed Grecians boss in July 1991, Ball keeps the Devon club in the third tier - staying up on the final day of both 1991/92 and 1992/93. Leaves in January 1994 to take over at Saints.

SAINTS

Ball wins his first game in charge, 2-1 at Newcastle, and eventually guides Saints to top flight safety.

With Matt Le Tissier in sparking form, Saints finish 1994/95 in 10th place.

MANCHESTER CITY

Ball is appointed City boss in the summer of 1995, but makes a miserable start - City taking just two points from their first 11 league games.

In the end, City are relegated on the final day, with Saints staying up at their expense.

Is sacked by City just three games into the 1996/97 second tier season.

POMPEY

Is appointed boss at Fratton Park for a second time in January 1998 wit the club bottom of the second division.

Ball keeps Pompey up, winning the final two games of the season.

After the club only just avoid the drop in 1998/99, Ball is sacked by Pompey for a second time in December 1999.

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Howe: This is ideal for our youngsters

EDDIE Howe has urged Cherries' youngsters to prove to him that they deserve a chance in the Premier League.

The Dorset club's fledglings – watched over by Carl Fletcher – kicked off their Premier League Cup campaign with a 3-2 win against Norwich City at Vitality Stadium this week.

Benik Afobe hit a hat-trick while another striker, Callum Wilson, made his competitive comeback after suffering a knee injury last February.

Qualification last month represented something of a coup for the category three Cherries, who have been thrust into a competition in which category one and two clubs compete.

Fletcher's troops are guaranteed at least six games having been placed with the Canaries, Wolves and Bury in Group C, a welcome boost with fixtures relatively sporadic in the Central

Eddie Howe.

League.

Unlike Saints, for example, Cherries' category status means they are not allowed to compete in the Checkatrade Trophy.

And boss Howe is hopeful that locking horns with high-quality opposition will give the club's youngsters the stern test they need to develop.

Howe said: "The unfortunate thing for us is that due to our academy status, we miss out on some of the bridging which other clubs get, opportunities to give young players a higher level of football – more quality opposition and better games.

"We miss out on that and I think that's been really difficult for us.

"But this is a really good chance for a lot of the young guns to put themselves up against better players and better teams and to try to say to me that they are good enough to be involved in the Premier League.

HANTS CRICKET

Abbott the ace

Simon **Walter**

The 2017 season had more than a little déjà vu for Hampshire fans.

Another Great Escape was needed on the season's final day at Edgbaston, a month after Hampshire suffered a fifth T20 semi-final defeat in six years on the same ground.

As if to highlight the inconsistencies that plagued their season, Hampshire achieved their highest County Championship finish for nine years in ensuring their division one survival.

There were many memorable moments between the opening win at Headingley and the draw at Warwickshire that secured fifth place.

These are the individuals, with my mark out of 10, that made it another unforgettable season.

Main picture - Kyle Abbott takes one of his 60 Championship wickets in 2017.
Above - Ian Holland emerged as a genuine all rounder.
Below - James Vince top scored for Hampshire in all three formats.

KYLE ABBOTT - 9

Finished the season as the County Championship's third Most Valuable Player after Warwickshire off-spinner Jeetan Patel and Samit Patel, who helped Nottinghamshire win the second division title. Hampshire would have been relegated without him.

Only County Championship winners Jamie Porter and Simon Harmer took more division one wickets than the South African, whose haul of 60 at 18.2 is the best top-flight haul by a Hampshire bowler for nine years.

As a Test-standard bowler at the peak of his powers, Abbott showed how fortunate Hampshire are to have him.

His batting was also vital to Hampshire's Great Escape.

With 418 runs at 29.85, Abbott must rank as the best number nine in the country.

He was not so effective in the white-ball formats.

Only Mason Crane took more than his 17 T20 wickets at 28.64, but Abbott's 8.93 economy rate at least gives him one area to improve on for 2018.

JAMES VINCE - 8

Hampshire's Batsman of the Year did well enough to earn a spot in England's Ashes squad.

Made 147 at number three in April against a Yorkshire side including Joe Root, who will hope for more of the same against Australia this winter.

Despite that ton and his 104 against Surrey at The Oval, Vince finished with a disappointing aggregate of 626 runs at 32.94, an average that is slightly above par for Vince in the first division.

It is hoped that he does during this winter's Ashes what Michael Vaughan did in 2002/03.

But it is surprising that Vince has not played more for England in the white-ball formats, after another stellar limited-overs season.

He was comfortably Hampshire's leading scorer in both the Royal London One-Day Cup (463 at 77.16) and Natwest T20 Blast (542 runs at 38.71), so finished with an aggregate of 1631 runs in all competitions.

His 178 against Glamorgan in May is Hampshire's highest-ever individual one-day score, breaking a 42 year-old Gordon Greenidge record.

But it summed up Hampshire's inconsistencies that Vince's Hampshire went on to lose the game.

Four fifties in the last five T20 games made him Hampshire's all-time leading run scorer in the shortest format.

JIMMY ADAMS - 6

As it turned out, the veteran left-hander's 166 in the last of Hampshire's three Championship wins, by an innings and 94 runs against Warwickshire in June, was crucial to the county's first division survival.

Adams also scored 144 in Hampshire's draw against Surrey at The Oval.

But he continues to average just over 30 since Hampshire's return to the first division in 2014.

This was his first season without playing a T20 game since 2006 and he only played two games in the Royal London One Day Cup.

Sadly, a magnificent county career from one of Hampshire's

HANTS CRICKET

in Hants' pack

Gareth Berg was impressive with bat and ball in 2017.

Mason Crane impressed in one day games, but only appeared in half of Hampshire's Championship matches.

George Bailey will hope to make more of an impact in 2018.

own is in its twilight.

TOM ALSOP - 5

Very unfortunate to be the player to make way for Rilee Rossouw at the start of the season, having played for the England Lions during the winter, and to be dropped after making 40 as Hampshire won their second match against Yorkshire at Headingley.

With Rossouw and Lewis McManus injured and Carberry gone, he made four of his five Championship appearances in September as a wicketkeeper-batsman, initially at number three before being promoted to open in the last game against Warwickshire.

But the left-hander did not respond with the runs he would have liked, finishing the season with 118 at 16.85.

Made the first of Hampshire's four centuries during the failure to qualify from the Royal London One-Day Cup group, a match-winning 112 not out at Kent in the opening game. But his unbeaten 43 against the same opposition marred a consistent T20 campaign (267 runs at 33.37) as Hampshire lost by five runs – despite having six wickets in hand.

GEORGE BAILEY - 6

Topped Hampshire's Championship batting averages with 610 runs at 38.12, which tells its own story.

Missed the first three matches of the season to get married and last month's washout at Uxbridge to play one game for a World T20 XI against Pakistan.

Understandable, but it was not ideal for Hampshire to be without their captain for nearly a third of the Championship season.

His 161 against Surrey at The Oval in July was one of his two Championship centuries. He also scored a Royal London One-Day Cup ton at The Oval and only James Vince scored more for Hampshire in both white-ball competitions.

Did not produce the match-winning performances that were expected of an overseas player, but has the chance to put that right when he returns next year.

GARETH BERG - 8

An outstanding season from Hampshire's second-best player after Kyle Abbott.

Once again, he showed he is a genuine all-rounder by averaging more with the bat (31.55) than the ball (26.67) while contributing 568 runs and taking 37 wickets.

Those are stats comparable with his debut season in 2015, when he was Hampshire's Player of the Year with 672 runs (at 32) and 42 wickets at (28.11).

After an injury-disrupted 2016, it has been an impressive response.

Still a key player in white-ball cricket, it is hard to believe he will be 37 in January.

MASON CRANE - 7

Only played half of Hampshire's 14 County Championship matches, a disappointment to many (not least England's management), after the great strides the precocious leg-spinner made during the winter.

The combination of a wet summer and Hampshire's batting woes made it difficult for him to make an impact in four-day cricket (16 wickets at 44.68) but his 5-40 against Somerset at Taunton in May was match-winning and he was the county's leading wicket-taker in both the T20 Blast (18 wickets at 17.33) and Royal London One-Day Cup (14 wickets at 27.42).

This was also the season he made his England T20 debut at The Ageas Bowl, before claiming AB de Villiers as his first international scalp in the same series four days later.

His Test debut during the forthcoming Ashes series is also very likely, at Sydney if not before.

IAN HOLLAND - 7

Began the season on trial in the Second XI but the Aussie with a British passport established himself as a key member of Hampshire's County Championship team. After making his debut in June he ended up playing eight Championship matches. Took 4-16 on his home Championship debut in an incredible six-over spell against Somerset. Finished the season with a very respectable 19 wickets at 18.47.

Continued on page 34

Howe glad for PL Cup opportunity

"It's a considerable jump from the standard that most of them are playing but I'm really looking forward to seeing them play and they will be great games for us.

"The youngsters are going to get guaranteed games, in good stadiums, against good players.

"No disrespect to the teams we do play and have historically played, but that's a long way from the Premier League games.

"That's why I think it's so good that we get a taste of it and, hopefully, as things progress at the football club, this could become a regular occurrence for us."

Although the Premier League Cup is primarily an under-23 competition, teams are permitted to use three overage outfield players and an overage goalkeeper.

Won last season by Swansea City, the Premier League Cup is played in a Champions League-style

Callum Slattery.

format with 32 clubs in the group stage.

The top two teams in each group advance to the knockout rounds, which will be contested as one-off ties.

If knockout ties are level after 90 minutes, they will go to extra-time and then penalties if necessary.

Saints have been drawn in a group with Cardiff, Watford and Blackburn.

They have already lost 2-1 to Watford at Staplewood.

Remaining games

Cardiff v Saints – Thursday, Nov 2 at Leckwith International Stadium

Saints v Blackburn – Monday, Dec 4 at Staplewood

Watford v Saints – Monday, Jan 22 (TBC)

Saints v Cardiff – Friday, Feb 9 at Staplewood

Blackburn v Saints – Monday, Feb 26 at Lancs FA.

We must be 'radical' - Coe

Lord Coe, the president of athletics' world governing body, says track and field must be "radical" to remain relevant.

The retirement of Usain Bolt and the format of athletics meetings, including August's World Championships in London, have brought the sport under increased scrutiny, leading to questions about whether it needs to evolve.

IAAF president Coe has suggested shorter tracks and raised the prospect of auctions for athletes to compete for city franchises, like those undertaken for cricketers in the Indian Premier League.

Coe said: "The sport is open and should be ready for change.

"I'm not ruling anything out now. Everything is on the table. I want to look at simple things. Why are we wedded to 400-metre tracks? Why not have a pop-up 300m track in a football stadium

"There are lots of things we can do. What about cities, teams, franchises?

Sebastian Coe

"You see the excitement of the pick with the IPL auction. We need to have some early hour moments of unease about what we are prepared to do. We have to be radical."

Coe accepts there may be resistance to change, particularly if it jeopardises the future of established events.

He added: "There will be challenges from the status quo. There will be gender challenges, challenges from the field and some track athletes. We should just look at this now, recognise that we have to make those changes.

"I talked about the concept of pop-up tracks. Why can't we put a 200m track in a venue?

"It wouldn't be a championship track, but take the sport to where you've got infrastructure."

Coe added: "We've got to get people to recognise that good racing is not simply about how fast can you get from A to B. There's got to be a drama, there's got to be things happening."

HANTS CRICKET

Have we seen the

From page 33

A genuine all-rounder, his 233 runs at 33.28 included two half-centuries. A fine effort considering he had only played one first-class match prior to this season.

LIAM DAWSON - 7

His best season with the ball in the County Championship, no mean achievement in such an inclement summer.

Only Gareth Berg and Kyle Abbott took more than his 31 Championship wickets (at 26.09). Was also consistent with the ball in the white-ball formats.

By his own admission he has not scored the runs expected of him this year (334 runs at 20.87 in the Championship), but the 94 balls he batted out for nine runs at Edgbaston in his final innings of the season were crucial to Hampshire's survival.

FIDEL EDWARDS - 7

A County Championship specialist this season, his return of 30 wickets at 25.73 apiece was very respectable after an injury-ruined 2016. Last month's five-fers against Middlesex (5-79) and Warwickshire (5-49) were his first since his heroics during Hampshire's last Great Escape in 2015.

He may have done enough to get another one-year deal but will be 36 in February.

LEWIS MCMANUS - 6

Consolidated his place as Hampshire's first-choice wicketkeeper-batsman, with 285 runs at 23.75, before a broken finger ended his season prematurely at the beginning of August.

Played a key role in the four-wicket win against Yorkshire at Headingley in the first week of the season, making 71 unbeaten runs (40 and 31).

Also ensured Hampshire began their Natwest T20 Blast campaign with a win by scoring a career-best 59 (35 balls) against Glamorgan.

SEAN ERVINE - 5

After a disappointing 13th season with Hampshire, it remains to be seen whether the popular all-rounder will be back next year.

He was one of only three ever-presents in Hampshire's Championship side (alongside Kyle Abbott and Gareth Berg) but his aggregate of 572 runs at 28.6 included 203 in the innings win against Warwickshire in June.

Hampshire's most decorated player was dropped from the T20 side after averaging ten during the group stage.

MICHAEL CARBERRY - 5

Main picture - will Sean Ervine be back at Hampshire again next year?
Left - wicket-keeper/batsman Lewis McManus.
Top left - Liam Dawson.

After an excellent pre-season he made 98 in the first home match of the season, a Championship draw against Middlesex.

But he would only score one more half-century during what turned out to be his last eight first-class innings for Hampshire, before moving to Leicestershire last month with a season's aggregate of 272 Championship runs at 24.72.

There were flashes of the old Carberry in mid-summer during the T20 Blast, not least his match-winning 77 against Middlesex.

But he did not get to leave on a high as his last appearance for the county was the semi-final defeat against Nottinghamshire at Edgbaston.

RILEE ROSSOUW - 5

A controversial signing at the turn of the year, his debut season did not develop as he hoped, with two broken fingers limiting him to eight Championship matches.

Whetted the appetite of many Hampshire fans when he made 99 against Middlesex with his first broken digit in April, but after five ducks in his next eight innings he finished with a disappointing return of 253 runs at 19.46.

His 47-ball 60 in the win against Middlesex at Lord's was the highlight of a T20 season that yielded 255 runs at 28.33.

And he raised hopes of a stellar Royal London One-day Cup cam-

HANTS CRICKET

last of Sean Ervine?

Right - Rilee Roussow faded after a bright start.
Below right - Fidel Edwards was a mainstay of Hampshire's red ball attack.
Bottom right - Michael Carberry pictured during his final innings for Hampshire.

paign with 156 against Somerset at Taunton, only to be restricted to three 50-over matches.

REECE TOPLEY

Another injury-plagued season for the England left-armer. The 23 year-old was restricted to two wickets in two Championship appearances after recovering from a fractured hand and shoulder surgery, only to suffer another stress fracture of the back.

When he played, his best performances were with the white ball.

Took 4-68 against Essex in early May in the RLODC and 3-23 as Hampshire won their opening T20 game against Glamorgan.

BRAD WHEAL

Took 11 wickets at 32 apiece in his four Championship appearances. Took 4-98 and 3-73 against Middlesex in April, but only bowled 23 more first-class overs.

Was restricted to just one white-ball appearance, Hampshire's last T20 group game against Somerset.

JOE WEATHERLEY

Began the season on loan with Kent at his own request, making 190 runs at 23.75 in five division two games before returning to play three Championship matches for his home county last month (45 runs at 11.25).

FELIX ORGAN

The England U19 international made his first-class debut in the farcical washout out at Uxbridge. Will continue his development in the Young Lions squad this winter.

SHAHID AFRIDI

Took Hampshire's T20 quarter-final by storm with his record-breaking 43-ball 101 against Derbyshire at Derby. Smashed seven sixes and ten fours as Hampshire amassed 249-8, their highest total in the shortest format.

But his latest Hampshire stint ended with a platinum duck at Finals Day.

Took 13 wickets with his leg spin during the group stage, including hauls of 4-20 and 4-26, but it is his Derby ton that will be remembered.

CHRIS WOOD

T20 specialist who saved his best for Finals Day, taking two wickets during the powerplay - including Alex Hales' scalp.

Has done well to recover from surgery on both knees but was expensive during the group stage.

Restricted to a solitary outing, in the Royal London One-day Cup and none in the Championship for the first time since his Hampshire career began.

JAKE LINTOTT

The 24 year-old slow left-armer was a surprise debutant in the last T20 group game and took the wicket of Johann Myburgh in the defeat at home to Somerset. Had impressed for Hampshire in the Second XI Championship.

MATT SALISBURY

Former Suffolk seamer took four wickets in a couple of Championship matches after impressing while on trial.

BRAD TAYLOR

Made his third Championship appearance in five seasons, against Lancashire at Old Trafford, before his season was ended by his second freak ankle injury in as many years in August.

Didn't play any white-ball cricket this year.

CALVIN DICKINSON

Burst on to the T20 scene with a 24-ball 51 against Kent at Canterbury, an extraordinary performance in only his second senior game for Hampshire, after starting the season in the academy.

Also made 99 on his first-class debut against South Africa A but Tom Alsop was preferred with the gloves (in Lewis McManus's absence) during the County Championship run-in.

Five of the worst ...

England may have qualified for next summer's World Cup with Thursday's 1-0 defeat of Slovenia, but their underwhelming performance did little to build optimism surrounding their prospects.

Here, Declan Warrington revisits five of their worst displays of the modern era.

1. Northern Ireland 1 England 0, September 7 2005, World Cup qualifying

The first qualification defeat of Sven-Goran Eriksson's reign as manager was also the worst performance of his five years. In his pursuit of an alternative to his long favoured 4-4-2 formation, Eriksson experimented with a 4-3-3 that perhaps played only to the strengths of David Beckham's ball-playing ability. Wayne Rooney, starting wide on the left, cut a frustrated figure throughout as England lost to David Healy's impressive 73rd-minute finish. The Irish XI contained a young Steven Davis.

2. Croatia 2 England 0, October 11 2006, Euro Championship qualifying

A performance and result from which manager Steve McClaren and goalkeeper Paul Robinson arguably never recovered. In the most difficult fixture of England's qualification campaign, McClaren gambled on a 3-5-2 formation his team were so uncomfortable with, they produced a poor display best captured by the own goal scored by Gary Neville when Robinson miskicked his backpass.

3. England 0 Algeria 0, June 18

Sven Goran Eriksson

2010, World Cup

Not England's worst result - but certainly one of their worst displays. Following the disappointing 1-1 draw with the United States in their opening fixture in South Africa, Fabio Capello's stale, rigid team required victory to finish top of Group C and therefore avoid one of the more difficult opponents in the second round. What unfolded was a tedious display bereft of urgency and belief.

4. Germany 4 England 1, June 27 2010, World Cup

If England's lethargy throughout the group stage caused widespread concern, any remaining optimism swiftly vanished against Germany. Much has been made of Frank Lampard's free-kick crashing off the bar and bouncing over the line when the Germans led 2-1 but there was no escaping the extent to which England were outclassed.

5. England 1 Iceland 2, June 27 2016, European Championship

The final game of Roy Hodgson's four-year reign as manager was also the poorest display he had overseen and one of the worst results in England's history. They took the lead with a fourth-minute penalty but conceded two poor goals and subsequently lost any belief they had, instead performing with an apparent awareness of the pressure they were under.

Japan GP - the big issues

Lewis Hamilton heads to Suzuka for this weekend's Japanese Grand Prix looking to extend his lead at the top of the drivers' championship.

The Briton has pulled further clear of main title rival Sebastian Vettel despite both he and his Mercedes team insisting they are unhappy with the car's current performance.

Here, the Sports Pink looks at the main talking points heading into what could prove to be a pivotal race in this season's championship fight.

FERRARI NEED LUCK TO TURN

Vettel and team-mate Kimi Raikkonen should have taken more points from the last two grands prix than the feeble fourth-place achieved by the German last weekend in Malaysia.

The pair collided with the Red Bull of Max Verstappen on the first corner in Singapore in the previous

Sebastian Vettel

round before engine and battery woes struck both cars in Kuala Lumpur.

If Ferrari are to reel in Mercedes in the both championships they need for these incidents to be at an end heading to Suzuka, otherwise they will be all-but handing Hamilton his fourth world title.

SILVER ARROWS SHOULD BE MORE COMPETITIVE

Hamilton and Mercedes head of motorsport Toto Wolff both spoke in negative tones despite his impressive second-place finish in Malaysia.

The car had been slower than both Ferrari and Red Bull for much of the weekend but, after storming to a surprising pole, Hamilton took 18 points which could prove vital come the end of the season.

Mercedes should be quicker here, especially in the cooler conditions forecast

HANTS CRICKET

Afridi ends a 38-

Simon Carter

'Boom Boom' wins Walter Lawrence Trophy for fastest ton of county season

SHAHID Afridi has become the first Hampshire player since the legendary Gordon Greenidge to win the Walter Lawrence Trophy.

The Pakistan legend won the award, which is awarded to the player who made the fastest first class century of the county cricket season, for his blistering 42-ball ton in Hampshire's NatWest Blast quarter final win at Derby.

Afridi was promoted to open the innings for the first time this year, and responded by hammering seven sixes and 10 fours in his spectacular 101.

It was the first hundred of his impressive T20 career - which spans over 250 appearances for a myriad of teams - and was well above his career T20 average of just 18.97!

Afridi's remarkable performance in the East Midlands helped Hampshire post 249-8 - easily the county's highest ever total in the shortest form of the game.

It was also the fourth highest in the history of English county T20.

The 37-year-old Afridi is no stranger to big hitting - witness his nickname of 'Boom Boom'.

He once held the record for the fastest ODI hundred, scored off 37 balls against Sri Lanka in 1996 when he was just 16 years and 217 days old.

Afridi will be presented with his trophy, along with a cheque for £3,000 and a special medallion, at the Walter Lawrence Trophy Dinner in The Long Room at Lord's on November 7.

Now in its 83rd year, the Walter Lawrence Trophy, awarded for the fastest hundred of the season, is open to all domestic county competitions as well as One-Day Internationals, T20 Internationals and Test Matches in England.

The criteria was slightly different when Greenidge won the Walter Lawrence Trophy in 1978.

Back then, the award was given to the player who compiled the fastest hundred in terms of minutes.

Greenidge won the award for his 82-minute century against Glamorgan at the County Ground in Southampton in September 1978.

He had been dismissed for a duck in the first innings of the game, but wasted no time wreaking his revenge on the Welsh county second time around.

Not that anyone would ever accuse Greenidge of taking his time, but his winning time was among the slowest of the 1970s Walter Lawrence Trophy winners.

Gloucestershire's Mike Proctor won the award in 1979 for a 57-minute hundred, while England pace bowler won it in 1977 for an extraordinary 37-minute ton.

The fastest player to reach three figures in terms of minutes - before the rules were changed to number of balls faced - was Steve O'Shaughnessy in 1983.

On the last day of the Championship season, the Lancashire batsman and his opening partner Graeme Fowler took full advantage of some 'declaration' bowling by Leicestershire.

David Gower (9–0–102–0) and James Whitaker (8–1–87–0) were told to serve up some easy runs, which they certainly did as Fowler reached three figures in 46 minutes and O'Shaughnessy in a breath-taking 35 minutes.

In all, Lancashire scored 214 off 27.1 overs. That was considered exceptional at the time but, as Afrid showed at Derby, modern day cricket teams can score even quicker - and at a time when the bowlers are really trying!

HANTS CRICKET

year Trophy wait

Shahid Afridi, main picture, has become the first Hampshire player since Gordon Greenidge, above, to win the Walter Lawrence Trophy.

● Here, Elliot Binks takes a look at the fastest Walter Lawrence Trophy winners in recent county cricket history ...

Dan Christian, 2014

Middlesex's Dan Christian was a joint-winner of the WLT after hitting a 46-ball century against Kent in the T20 Blast at Canterbury

The Australian, who helped Hampshire win the T20 in 2010 in his first taste of county cricket, hit nine fours and eight sixes before being bowled for 129.

However, despite Christian's heroics, Middlesex still fell 17 runs short of Kent's of 209 from 20 overs.

Sam Billings

A few weeks after watching Christian hit a 46-ball century against his Kent side, Billings matched that feat.

His effort featured 12 fours and four sixes and arrived in the Royal London One-Day Cup tie against Somerset at Taunto.

The wicket-keeper batsman smashed 135 not out from 58 balls, showing the kind of form that would see him become one of just five Englishman to take part in the 2016 Indian Premier League.

Mark Ealham

The all-rounder wasted no time in scoring the fastest century of the 2006 season. In the April 16 curtain-raiser between Notts and the MCC at Lord's, Ealham reached three figures off just 44 balls

Helping himself to 11 fours and seven sixes, a staggering 94 of his 100 runs were amassed from boundaries.

Also in 2006, Essex's Mark Pettini whacked a 27-ball hundred against Leicester in the Championship. However, his knock was considered ineligible for WLT contention because he was facing 'joke' bowling prior to a declaration.

Graham Napier

It's perhaps unsurprising that Graeme Napier's historic innings for Essex against Sussex won him the 2008 WLT.

Napier smashed his way to 152 not out, which was not only the highest individual score in domestic T20 Cup history, but also featured a world-record 16 sixes in a single innings.

Napier had brought up his century from 44 balls with an even split of nine sixes and nine fours.

Incidentally, this had been the first time the WLT had been open to all domestic county competitions - making Napier the first man to win the Trophy with a limited-over innings.

Kevin O'Brien

At the top of the Gloucestershire batting order, Kevin O'Brien scored a 44-ball century against Middlesex at Uxbridge to claim the 2011 WLT.

O'Brien's ton included seven fours and nine sixes and helped his side to what was, at the time, the highest ever domestic T20 team score - 254-3 from their 20 overs.

Darren Stevens

Another 44-ball century was enough to see Darren Stevens claim the 2013 Trophy.

At 37 years of age, the evergreen Kent all-rounder hit 10 fours and six sixes against Sussex at Canterbury in 40-over action.

The hosts went on to post 337/7 in what was the final season of 40-over cricket in the English game.

Tom Kohler-Cadmore

On May 20 2016, Tom Kohler-Cadmore opened the batting for Worcestershire with a 43-ball century against Durham at New Road.

Continued on page 38

From facing page

So not only can Hamilton battle it out on a level playing field but his team-mate Valtteri Bottas will be hoping to be back on form, too.

WILL RED BULL ADD EXTRA ENERGY?

Verstappen won superbly in Malaysia for Red Bull's second victory of the season and he was joined on the Sepang podium by team-mate Daniel Ricciardo. The team have battled back towards the front of the grid having been surpassed by Mercedes and, for much of the season, Ferrari. But now they can be a big player in the title picture with both Verstappen and Ricciardo capable of taking important points from either Hamilton or Vettel.

A HAPPY HOMECOMING?

Since Honda returned to Formula One in 2015 they have failed to impress, lurching from failure to farce despite a huge budget - now at their home race the spotlight will be back on them. It has already been announced Honda

Jolyon Palmer

will end their partnership with McLaren at the end of the season and will instead provide power units to Toro Rosso next year. But things have looked up recently as Stoffel Vandoorne has taken two consecutive seventh-placed finishes to leapfrog his experienced team-mate Fernando Alonso in the standings.

TIME RUNNING OUT FOR PALMER

Jolyon Palmer's future in F1 continues to look bleak as the Renault driver heads to Suzuka still searching for a drive in 2018. The Briton has lost his seat to Carlos Sainz for next season and there are very few options remaining. Palmer has entered 36 races since his debut but has managed just two point-scoring finishes. Sadly for him, the world of F1 is not a place renowned for its patience.

The fastest centuries

From page 37

He reached the landmark with 13 fours and five sixes, before going on to make 127 from 54 balls - the highest score by a Worcs batsman in 14 years of T20 cricket.

Shahid Afridi

As already mentioned, the Pakistan all-rounder plundered the fastest century of the 2017 season with a 42-ball ton against Derbyshire.

David Willey

England ODI star Willey won the 2015 WLT with his scorching hundred for Northants against Sussex in the T20 Blast quarter-final at Hove.

Having earlier taken 3-27, Willey blasted a 40-ball century that included seven fours and 10 sixes.

In winning the award, Willey beat fierce competition from limited overs specialists like Brendan McCullum (42 balls) and Chris Gayle (45 balls).

Scott Styris

With Sussex facing Gloucestershire in the T20 quarter-final at Hove, Scott Styris seized centre stage by slugging five fours and nine sixes in a 37-ball century.

The Kiwi's effort officially went down as the fastest-ever century in English cricket from balls faced and non-contrived bowling, with the high point arriving in the 18th over when

Scott Styris

he helped Sussex take 38 runs off a James Fuller over - the most in professional cricket history.

Tom Moody

Edging out Styris as the fastest-scoring winner of the WLT is Australian Tom Moody, who bludgeoned his way to a 36-ball century for Warwickshire against Glamorgan on July 27, 1990.

However, it's worth noting that Moody's 36-ball century was scored against what was branded "declaration bowling." In other words, Glamorgan had deliberately been bowling poorly in a bid to force a declaration from Warwickshire.

As a result, Moody took just 11 minutes to hit his first 50, with the second arriving 15 minutes later.

Moody fell two balls short of David Hookes' all-time record of a century off 34 deliveries - and was happy to do so.

Speaking afterwards, he noted: "It would have been a bit terrible taking that off Hookesy. His century was in a real situation."

Hookes scored his century in November 1982 while captaining South Australia against Victoria in a Sheffield Shield game. He normally batted No 3 or 4 but promoted himself to open as he was annoyed rival skipper Graeme Yallop had delayed a declaration.

HANTS CRICKET

Recalling Hants'

Simon Carter

Vince and Crane hoping for better luck than predecessors!

Michael Carberry, main picture, in action during the 2013/14 Ashes series. Below - John Crawley played his last Test in the 2002/03 Ashes. Right - Kevin Pietersen lost 5-0 Down Under during his sole Ashes tour as a Hampshire player in 2006/07.

HAMPSHIRE pair James Vince and Mason Crane have been named in the England squad to contest the Ashes.

Here, the Sports Pink looks at how recent Hampshire tourists fared when they travelled to Australia.

2002/03

John Crawley found himself recalled to the England Test scene after a near three-year absence after moving from Lancashire to Hampshire ahead of the 2002 county season.

He made headlines straight away with a phenomenal knock of 272 in his first Championship innings for his new county against Kent at Canterbury.

Crawley made 80 in his second game against Leicestershire before another 50 in the return game with Kent.

A second Ashes tour - Crawley had previously gone on the 1994/95 trip - duly followed in 2002/03.

He was included in the England XI for the first Test in Brisbane, where he made an unbeaten 69 in the first innings.

That was as good as it got for him all tour, as he was out for a second ball duck in the second innings as England were routed for 79 to lose by a mammoth 384 runs.

Not the best way to start an overseas Ashes tour, to say the least!

Crawley was instantly dropped but returned to the team for the fourth Test at Perth. There he scored 17 - batting at No 7 - and 33 as England lost by five wickets.

With the Ashes already lost, Crawley retained his place for the fifth Test at Sydney. He scored 35 not and eight in England's victory, and that was the last of his 37 Test matches.

Crawley ended his Test career with 1,800 runs at 34.61, with four centuries and nine half centuries.

2006/07

Hampshire's Kevin Pietersen had made his name with the 158 at The Oval in September 2005 which helped England win the Ashes for the first time since 1987.

As a result, he was a key member of the top order that travelled to defend the urn. It turned out to be a nightmare series for the tourists, which started badly when the first ball of the series from Steve Harmison was caught in the slips.

England never recovered - battered by 277-runs in that first Test and Brisbane (where Pietersen scored 16 and 92) and eventually humiliated 5-0.

Pietersen compiled his second Ashes score of 158 in the second Test in Adelaide, where England rattled up 551-6 declared with Paul Collingwood hitting 206.

Despite that, the tourists still lost!

Pietersen was bowled by his great friend and former Hampshire colleague Shane Warne for two in the second innings as England collapsed to 129 all out, en route to an incredibly painful five wicket defeat.

Pietersen top scored with 70 in England's first innings at Perth, followed by a second innings 50 not out - but the tourists still lost by 206 runs.

More misery followed at Melbourne, where England lost by an innings and 99 runs.

Pietersen was again dismissed by Warne, this time in the first innings for 21, while another ex-Hampshire man, seamer Stuart Clarke, bowled him for a single in the second innings.

Emotions ran high in the final Test at Sydney, which was the last Test match for Warne, Glenn

HANTS CRICKET

Ashes tourists

McGrath and Justin Langer.

It was a winning finale with McGrath twice dismissing Pietersen for 41 and 29 as Australia cantered to a 10-wicket success.

2010/11

Worth mentioning here for the exploits of Pietersen and his former Hampshire colleague Chris Tremlett.

By the time England departed for Australia to defend the Ashes they had reclaimed in the summer of 2009, both men were playing for Surrey.

England drew the opening Test in Brisbane, thanks to a eye-popping second innings score of 517-1 declared - Alistair Cook (235no), Jonathan Trott (135no) and Andrew Strauss (110) all scoring centuries.

Pietersen starred in the second Test win at Adelaide, hitting a Test best 227 in England's innings success.

Tremlett was recalled for the third Test - his first Test appearance since 2007 - and took eight wickets overall as England were caned by 267 runs in Perth.

Pietersen flopped, with 0 and 3.

The final two Tests England won by an innings, to win the Ashes Down Under for the first time since 1986/87.

Tremlett bagged 4-26 on the first day of the Melbourne Test as Australia were skittled for 98 - Pietersen following up with 51 in England's emphatic success.

Pietersen scored only 36 in England's sole innings in Sydney - but Alistair Cook (189), Ian Bell (115) and Matt Prior (118) all filled their boots as England piled up over 600 en route to another innings victory and a memorable series success.

2013/14

Michael Carberry had made his England Test debut against Bangladesh in early 2010, after Andrew Strauss decided to rest himself for the short tour.

After a three and a half year absence, the Hampshire opener was back in the frame - and this time for an Ashes tour.

Carberry was the latest to be given a chance to become Cook's regular opening partner following Strauss' retirement from the Test arena.

The left hander was not the first to be given that opportunity, and history was to show he certainly wouldn't be the last!

Carberry top scored in England's first innings of the first Test in Brisbane with 40 as they were dismissed for 136. He was out for a second innings duck as England managed 179 this time - to lose by a crushing 381 runs.

That set the tone for the series, where England were whitewashed for the second time in three Ashes trips.

Carberry managed 60 and 14 at Adelaide, where England this time were beaten by 218 runs.

He again made good starts in both innings at Perth, making 43 and 31, as England lost by 150 runs.

The games were getting closer!

Carberry scored 38 and 12 in the fourth Test in Melbourne, where at least England didn't lose by a large margin of runs this time. Instead, they lost by eight wickets.

The curtain on another series whitewash was brought down at Sydney, where Carberry managed 0 and 43 on what turned out to be his last Test match.

Somewhat unluckily, he was instantly jettisoned from the international scene - despite scoring 281 runs at 28.10.

Pietersen (294) was the only Englishman to score more runs in the series than Carberry, with fellow opener Cook making 246.

That was still not enough to save him from the Test chop, though.

'We can't lose Harry'

Kevin Keegan fears England's already faint World Cup hopes would evaporate - like his did in 1982 - should Harry Kane get injured.

Keegan was England's star man going into the tournament in Spain 35 years ago, but injuries to him and Trevor Brooking scuppered their dreams of glory.

Kane and his Tottenham team-mate Dele Alli are probably the modern-day equivalent of Keegan and Brooking, and the former England captain and manager has warned it is vital they stay fit for next summer's finals in Russia.

"I did think we had a chance in 1982 until me and Trevor Brooking got injured," he recalled. "We had other good players, but we were the main reason we qualified.

"It's important everyone stays fit. Not just Kane, but also Dele Alli. You want all your best players.

"If you went to a World

Harry Kane

Cup and you took, let's say, Johan Cruyff and Johan Neeskens out of the great Dutch side, people would not be surprised if they lost.

"But with England, people still think you are going to win it without your two best players. It's being English, it's the optimism."

Kane's goal against Slovenia rubber-stamped England's qualification for Russia next year at the end of a dismal match, which Keegan missed in favour of a wine-tasting evening.

Nevertheless, the ex-Saint admits he has been won over by the Spurs frontman having had his doubts.

"Alan Shearer is a massive fan of Kane," added Keegan. "I know from when I worked in Qatar with him he was saying how good Kane was. That was a year and a half ago and I wasn't sure.

"I said we need to have a good look at him, see if he gets the 20 or 30 goals that you were getting - and of course now he is doing that."

LOCAL CRICKET

A Sarisbury batsman, above, is run out. Bournemouth's Robbie Pack, above right, cheekily chips the ball over Max Watson's head. Pictures by Dave Vokes

Sarisbury go down with all guns blazing

... but they can't stop Fair Oak from taking U19 title

Bournemouth's Reuben Kitson misses a straight one. Fair Oak left-arm spinner Charlie Gwynn

Mike **Vimpany**

Sarisbury Athletic went down all guns blazing in their bid to prise the Hampshire Under-19 T20 Cup away from Fair Oak, the eventual winners.

They had to beat Bournemouth's total of 80-8 inside 12 overs to pip Fair Oak on run rate after the Tri-club final ended all square with each team winning one of its games at New Milton's Fernhill ground.

Led by Fareham & Crofton guest Ollie Southon (30) and Max Hoile (20), they gave it a terrific go. But with Robbie Pack and James March getting amongst the wickets, Sarisbury reached their target in 13.1 overs, a tad too late to deny Fair Oak the bounty.

A top order batting collapse led to Fair Oak losing their opening match against Bournemouth, but they bounced back to post a key 112-6 against Sarisbury – a total which was to prove key in their eventual success.

Hampshire Under-15 duo Fletcha Middleton (43) and Max Watson (37) top scored for Oaks, who rolled Sarisbury out for 62 to win by 50 runs.

Results -
Bournemouth 86-8 (Rob Pack 25, Ollie Breckon 17, Charlie Gwynn 3-19), Fair Oak 72 all out.
Bournemouth won by 14 runs.
Fair Oak 112-6 (Fletcha Middleton 43*, Max Watson 37, Gregor McKenzie 3-11, Alex Chessel 3-2)
Sarisbury 62 (Ollie Southon 18, Luke Perry 2-15, Ben Marshall 2-16).
Fair Oak won by 50 runs.
Bournemouth 80-8 (Ollie Breckon 17, Luke Perry 2-12, Ollie Southon 2-12)
Sarisbury 84-9 (Ollie Southon 30, Max Hoile 20, Rob Pack 3-18, James March 2-20).
Sarisbury won by one wicket.

5 things you can't miss in racing week

MILE IN MIND

The Group One bet365 Fillies' Mile ensures Newmarket's two-day meeting gets off to a flying start. Aidan O'Brien is thoroughly in the hunt for Bobby Frankel's record of 25 winners at the top level in a calendar year and the Ballydoyle handler is sure to have a handful of possibles for this juvenile event. Clemmie, Happily and September are all still in the mix at this stage but Karl Burke would surely be hoping May Hill heroine Laurens can make her presence felt if she lines up.

DEWHURST DATE

Expert Eye and Verbal Dexterity are on course for what could be an epic clash in Saturday's Darley Dewhurst Stakes. The traditional testing ground for next year's Classic hopes has been the target for Sir Michael Stoute's Expert Eye ever since a minor mishap derailed his planned outing in Ireland. The Jim Bolger-trained Verbal Dexterity took full advantage of his absence to lift the National Stakes, and add into the mix the likes of impressive Newbury scorer Emaraaty and O'Brien's usual mob-handed approach, you have a cracker of a race.

STAYING THE DISTANCE

The Betfred Cesarewitch forms the second leg of Newmarket's autumn double and only the stoutest of stayers need apply for the two-mile-two-furlong event. Jumps trainers are often to the fore and Alan King holds a couple of live chances, while Evan Williams' John Constable heads the market. The Darley and Autumn Stakes also feature on what is a top-quality Saturday of action.

YORK FINALE

York signs off for 2017 with a two-day fixture highlighted by Saturday's Coral Sprint Trophy and the Rockingham Stakes. The Knavesmire venue has enjoyed another stellar season with Enable's Yorkshire Oaks victory and Ulysses' power-packed finish to the Juddmonte International two of the abiding memories of the campaign. This meeting is certainly not of that calibre, but the Yorkshire faithful usually offer sound support for some competitive fare.

JUMPING INTO ACTION

The National Hunt crew will be delighted to see the British season kick up a gear with a fine two-day card at Chepstow. Saturday's fixture is headed up by the Grade Three totepool Silver Trophy Hurdle, while Sunday features the Grade Two totepool Persian War Novices' Hurdle.

FIXTURES (FLAT in capitals)

Monday: KEMPTON, PONTEFRACT, SALISBURY, WINDSOR
Tuesday: BRIGHTON, CATTERICK, LEICESTER, NEWCASTLE
Wednesday: KEMPTON, Ludlow, NOTTINGHAM, Towcester
Thursday: AYR, CHELMSFORD, Exeter, Worcester
Friday: KEMPTON, NEWMARKET (ITV4), Newton Abbot, YORK (ITV4)
Saturday: Chepstow, Hexham, KEMPTON, NEWMARKET (ITV), YORK (ITV)
Sunday: Chepstow, GOODWOOD

LOCAL CRICKET

Tom Barber

Barber chosen for Pace Programme

Bashley (Rydal) left-arm pace bowler Tom Barber has celebrated his new two-year Middlesex county contract by selection for England's International Pathway Pace Programme.

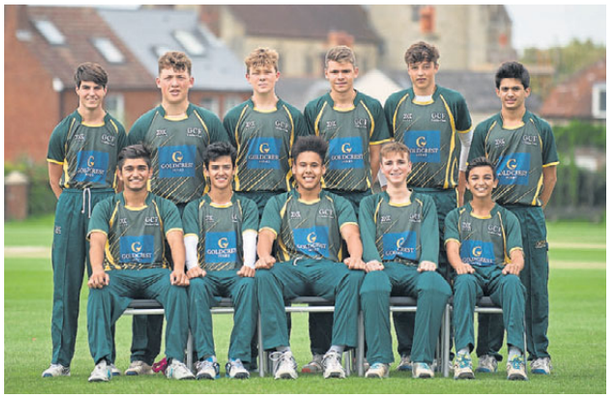
The Programme will be led by one-time Hampshire pace bowler Kevin Shine, the ECB's lead fast-bowling coach, and he will be assisted by Matt Mason, the Worcestershire assistant and fast bowling coach.

In addition to the opportunity for warm-weather training in South Africa early next year at the High Performance Institute for Sport at North West University's Potchefstroom campus, Barber and several other the bowlers will also make two trips to the Desert Springs resort in southern Spain.

After splitting their time between their counties and the Loughborough Performance Centre through October and November, the Pace Programme will head for Spain from December 9-14, and again from February 27 - March 3, after their return from South Africa.

Poole-born Barber, 22, played twice for Middlesex in this summer's NatWest T20 Blast, producing a fiery spell under the gaze of the Sky Sports television cameras against Hampshire at Lord's.

The left-arm quick, who studied science A-levels at Bournemouth School, made two Hampshire List-A appearances in 2014 during his spell on the Ageas Bowl academy, but has yet to make his full county championship debut.



Compton and Chandler's Ford CC

Hook and Newnham Basics CC. Pictures courtesy Dave Vokes.

Tale of two batsmen

Mike **Vimpany**

It was a tale of two batsmen in the county under 17 club final as Hook and Newnham Basics edged out Compton and Chandlers Ford on a superb May's Bounty track to lift the Kerry Cup.

Hook's Alex Brown belted an unbeaten 95 in just 63 balls including two sixes and 13 fours as the north Hampshire side totalled 181 for 4 after choosing to bat.

Greg Littlehales (2 for 27) was the pick of the CCF bowlers as the ball regularly disappeared over a lightning outfield or into the car park.

In reply Dorset's Luke Deacon (98 not out in 73 balls) went five better but Compton and Chandlers Ford closed 16 runs adrift as Hook conceded fewer boundaries.

Rupert Armstrong (2 for 21) starred as they added the Kerry Cup to their under 15 Justice Cup win earlier this year.

From left - Luke Deacon (Compton), Malcolm Kerry (competition organiser), Alex Brown (Hook).

Klopp is the right guy for Reds

Ex-Saint Kevin Keegan has urged Liverpool to stick with Jurgen Klopp, insisting the German remains the perfect fit at Anfield.

This weekend marks the second anniversary of Klopp's arrival on Merseyside, yet he heads into next Saturday's meeting with Manchester United under pressure after just one win in seven games.

Much like Keegan's swashbuckling Newcastle side of the mid-1990s, Klopp's Liverpool are devastating going forward but disastrous at the back.

Yet Keegan, who won three league titles, two UEFA Cups, the FA Cup and the European Cup as a player with Liverpool, insists Klopp is still the right man for the job.

"He's a great manager. He fits Liverpool, he gets Liverpool," said Keegan.

"There are a lot of teams in the Premier League struggling in defence. All the rules have been changed to suit attackers - yellow cards, red cards.

Kevin Keegan.

"It's no fun being a defender. If a defender misses three tackles he's off so it's no wonder they are cautious.

"I don't think Manchester City, Manchester United or Chelsea are great defensively. It's not just a Liverpool problem.

"Nowadays everything is built for teams to go forward, which is great. Who shows highlights of defending?

"Yes they are conceding goals and they say it's a bit like my (Newcastle) team, but at Liverpool fans want to see a good game of football and they want the team to have a go.

"Klopp is a hand-in-glove type. You can understand what he is saying, he doesn't talk in riddles, he says what he thinks.

"I hope they have patience with him if it doesn't actually go quite right because he is the right guy."

Got a sports story? Email echosport@dailyecho.co.uk

PINK LEAGUE FIXTURES 2017/18

SAINTS

PREMIER LEAGUE

AUGUST

12 Swansea (H)	D 0-0
19 West Ham (H)	W 3-2
26 Huddersfield (A)	D 0-0

SEPTEMBER

9 Watford (H)	L 0-2
16 Crystal Palace (A)	W 1-0
23 Man United (H)	L 0-1
30 Stoke (A)	L 1-2

OCTOBER

15 Newcastle	(H)
21 West Brom	(H)
29 Brighton	(A)

NOVEMBER

4 Burnley	(H)
18 Liverpool	(A)
26 Everton	(H)
29 Manchester City	(A)

DECEMBER

2 Bournemouth	(A)
10 Arsenal	(H)
13 Leicester	(H)
16 Chelsea	(A)
23 Huddersfield	(H)
26 Tottenham	(A)
30 Manchester United	(A)

JANUARY

1 Crystal Palace	(H)
13 Watford	(A)
20 Tottenham	(H)
31 Brighton	(H)

FEBRUARY

3 West Brom	(A)
10 Liverpool	(H)
24 Burnley	(A)

MARCH

3 Stoke	(H)
10 Newcastle	(A)
17 Swansea	(A)
31 West Ham	(A)

APRIL

7 Arsenal	(A)
14 Chelsea	(H)
21 Leicester	(A)
28 Bournemouth	(H)

MAY

5 Everton	(A)
13 Manchester City	(H)

CHERRIES

PREMIER LEAGUE

AUGUST

12 West Brom (A)	L 0-1
19 Watford (H)	L 0-2
26 Manchester City(H)	L 1-2

SEPTEMBER

9 Arsenal (A)	L 0-3
15 Brighton (H)	W 2-1
23 Everton (A)	L 1-2
30 Leicester (H)	D 0-0

OCTOBER

14 Tottenham	(A)
21 Stoke	(A)
28 Chelsea	(H)

NOVEMBER

4 Newcastle	(A)
18 Huddersfield	(H)
25 Swansea	(A)
29 Burnley	(H)

DECEMBER

2 Southampton	(H)
9 Crystal Palace	(A)
12 Manchester United	(A)
16 Liverpool	(H)
23 Manchester City	(A)
26 West Ham	(H)
30 Everton	(H)

JANUARY

1 Brighton	(A)
13 Arsenal	(H)
20 West Ham	(A)
31 Chelsea	(A)

FEBRUARY

3 Stoke	(H)
10 Huddersfield	(A)
24 Newcastle	(H)

MARCH

3 Leicester	(A)
10 Tottenham	(H)
17 West Brom	(H)
31 Watford	(A)

APRIL

7 Crystal Palace	(H)
14 Liverpool	(A)
21 Manchester United	(H)
28 Southampton	(A)

MAY

5 Swansea	(H)
13 Burnley	(A)

POMPEY

LEAGUE 1

AUGUST

5 Rochdale (H)	W 2-0
12 Oxford United(A)	L 0-3
19 Walsall (H)	D 1-1
26 Wigan (A)	D 1-1

SEPTEMBER

3 Rotherham (H)	L 0-1
9 AFC Wimbledon (A)	W 2-0
12 Northampton (A)	L 1-3
16 Fleetwood (H)	W 4-1
23 Scunthorpe (A)	L 0-2
26 Bristol Rovers(H)	W 3-0
30 Oldham (H)	L 1-2

OCTOBER

8 Gillingham	(A)
14 MK Dons	(H)
17 Doncaster	(A)
21 Blackburn	(A)
28 Bradford City	(H)

NOVEMBER

11 Blackpool	(A)
18 Southend	(H)
21 Peterborough	(A)
25 Plymouth	(H)

DECEMBER

9 Charlton	(A)
16 Bury	(H)
23 Shrewsbury	(A)
26 AFC Wimbledon	(H)
30 Northampton	(H)

JANUARY

1 Bristol Rovers	(A)
6 Fleetwood	(A)
13 Scunthorpe	(H)
20 Rotherham	(A)
27 Shrewsbury	(H)

FEBRUARY

3 Doncaster	(H)
10 MK Dons	(A)
13 Blackburn	(H)
17 Southend	(A)
24 Blackpool	(H)

MARCH

3 Bradford City	(A)
10 Gillingham	(H)
17 Oldham	(A)
24 Oxford United	(H)
31 Walsall	(A)

APRIL

2 Wigan	(H)
7 Rochdale	(A)
14 Plymouth	(A)
21 Charlton	(H)
28 Bury	(A)

MAY

5 Peterborough	(H)

EASTLEIGH

NATIONAL LEAGUE

AUGUST

5 Bromley (A)	D 0-0
8 Sutton United (H)	W 1-0
12 Dagenham (H)	D 2-2
15 Woking (A)	L 1-2
19 Tranmere (H)	W 2-0
26 Leyton Orient(A)	D 1-1
28 Aldershot (H)	D 0-0

SEPTEMBER

2 Ebbsfleet (A)	D 2-2
9 Guiseley (A)	D 0-0
12 Maidstone (H)	L 0-1
16 AFC Fylde (H)	D 2-2
23 Hartlepool (A)	W 2-1
30 Chester (H)	PP

OCTOBER

3 Boreham Wood (A)	L 0-1
7 Wrexham	(A)
21 Gateshead	(H)
24 Solihull Moors	(H)
28 Macclesfield	(A)

NOVEMBER

11 Dover	(A)
18 Barrow	(H)
21 Maidenhead	(H)
25 Halifax Town	(A)

DECEMBER

2 Sutton United	(A)
9 Bromley	(H)
23 Dagenham	(A)
26 Torquay	(H)
30 Woking	(H)

JANUARY

1 Torquay	(A)
6 Guiseley	(H)
20 Maidstone	(A)
27 Hartlepool	(H)

FEBRUARY

3 AFC Fylde	(A)
10 Boreham Wood	(H)
17 Chester	(A)
20 Maidenhead	(A)
24 Halifax Town	(H)

MARCH

3 Barrow	(A)
10 Dover Athletic	(H)
17 Leyton Orient	(H)
24 Tranmere	(A)
30 Ebbsfleet	(H)

APRIL

2 Aldershot	(A)
7 Wrexham	(H)
14 Gateshead	(A)
21 Macclesfield	(H)
28 Solihull Moors	(A)

POOLE

NATIONAL LEAGUE SOUTH

AUGUST

5 Weston SM (A)	W 2-1
8 Bognor Regis (H)	D 2-2
12 East Thurrock (H)	L 2-3
15 Chippenham (A)	W 1-0
19 St Albans City (H)	L 0-1
26 Bath City (A)	L 0-1
28 Hungerford (H)	L 1-2

SEPTEMBER

2 Whitehawk (A)	D 2-2
5 Hemel Hempstead(H)	L 2-4
9 Welling United (A)	L 0-2
11 Wealdstone (A)	L 1-4
23 Chelmsford City (H)	D 0-0

OCTOBER

7 Oxford City	(A)
14 Concord Rangers	(H)
21 Havant & W	(A)
28 Gloucester City	(H)

NOVEMBER

4 Eastbourne Borough	(A)
11 Braintree	(H)
18 Hampton & RB	(A)

DECEMBER

2 Dartford	(H)
9 Weston Super-Mare	(H)
23 Bognor Regis Town	(A)
26 Truro City	(H)

JANUARY

1 Truro City	(A)
6 Chippenham	(H)
13 East Thurrock	(A)
20 Welling United	(H)
27 Hemel Hempstead	(A)

FEBRUARY

3 Gloucester City	(A)
10 Havant & W	(H)
17 Eastbourne Borough	(H)
24 Braintree	(A)

MARCH

3 Hampton & RB	(H)
10 Dartford	(A)
17 Bath City	(H)
24 St Albans City	(A)
30 Whitehawk	(H)

APRIL

2 Hungerford	(A)
7 Chelmsford City	(A)
14 Wealdstone	(H)
21 Concord Rangers	(A)
28 Oxford City	(H)

PINK INK

GOSPORT

SOUTHERN PREMIER

AUGUST

12 King's Lynn Town(A) L 0-2
15 Slough Town (H) L 1-5
19 Royston Town(H) L 2-3
26 Tiverton Town(A) L 0-2
28 Basingstoke Town(H) L 0-8

SEPTEMBER

9 Biggleswade Town (A) L 0-2
12 Farnborough (H) L 2-4
23 Stratford Town (A) L 0-2
26 Kings Langley (A) D 1-1
30 Hitchin Town (H) L 0-3

OCTOBER

7 Bishop's Stortford (H)
9 Dorchester Town (A)
14 Merthyr Town (A)
17 Banbury United (H)
21 King's Lynn Town (H)
24 Slough Town (A)

NOVEMBER

4 St Neots Town (H)
11 Frome Town (A)
15 Farnborough (A)
18 Dunstable Town (H)
25 Kettering Town (A)
28 Kings Langley (H)

DECEMBER

2 Hereford (H)
9 Redditch United (A)
16 Chesham United (H)
23 St Ives Town (A)
26 Basingstoke Town (A)

JANUARY

1 Weymouth (H)
6 Royston Town (A)
13 Tiverton Town (H)
20 Bishop's Stortford (A)
27 Dorchester Town (H)

FEBRUARY

3 Banbury United (A)
10 Merthyr Town (H)
17 Hitchin Town (A)
24 Statford Town (H)

MARCH

3 Dunstable (A)
10 Kettering Town (H)
17 Redditch United (H)
24 Hereford (A)
31 Biggleswade Town (H)

APRIL

2 Weymouth (A)
7 St Ives Town (H)
14 Chesham United (A)
21 Frome Town (H)
28 St Neots Town (A)

AFC TOTTON

SOUTHERN WEST

AUGUST

12 Barnstaple Town(H) W 3-1
15 Bishops Cleeve(A) W 3-1
26 Slimbridge (H) L 1-2
28 Salisbury (A) L 0-2

SEPTEMBER

9 Yate Town (H) W 5-0
16 Taunton Town (A) L 1-2
23 Larkhall (A) W 1-0
26 North Leigh (H) W 2-1
30 Wimborne (A) D 1-1

OCTOBER

14 Cinderford (A)
21 Bideford (H)
24 Swindon Supermarine (A)

NOVEMBER

4 Kidlington (A)
11 Mangotsfield (H)
14 Didcot Town (H)
18 Shortwood (A)
25 Evesham United (H)
28 Wimborne Town (A)

DECEMBER

2 Cirencester Town (H)
9 Bristol Manor Farm (A)
16 Bishops Cleeve (H)
23 Barnstaple Town (A)
26 Salisbury (H)

JANUARY

1 Winchester City (A)
6 Taunton Town (H)
13 Slimbridge (A)
20 Mangotsfield (A)
27 Kidlington (H)

FEBRUARY

3 Larkhall Athletic (H)
10 North Leigh (A)
17 Cinderford Town (H)
24 Paulton Rovers (A)

MARCH

3 Swindon Supermarine (H)
10 Bideford (A)
17 Bristol Manor Farm (H)
24 Cirencester Town (A)
31 Yate Town (A)

APRIL

2 Winchester City (H)
7 Shortwood United (H)
14 Didcot Town (A)
21 Wimborne Town (H)
28 Evesham United (A)

WINCHESTER

SOUTHERN WEST

AUGUST

12 Shortwood (A) W 4-2
15 Kidlington (H) L 0-1
26 Larkhall (A) W 2-1
28 Wimborne (H) W 1-0

SEPTEMBER

9 Cirencester Town (A) L 0-1
16 Paulton (H) pp
23 Mangotsfield (H) W 3-0
26 Didcot Town (A) W 4-2
30 Barnstaple (A) W 4-1

OCTOBER

14 Bristol Manor Farm (H)
21 Taunton Town (A)
24 Salisbury (H)

NOVEMBER

4 Cinderford Town (A)
14 Swindon Supermarine (H)
18 Yate Town (A)
28 North Leigh (A)

DECEMBER

2 Evesham United (H)
9 Slimbridge (A)
16 Kidlington (A)
23 Shortwood United (H)
26 Wimborne Town (A)

JANUARY

1 AFC Totton (H)
6 Paulton Rovers (A)
13 Larkhall Athletic (H)
20 Bishops Cleeve (A)
27 Cinderford Town (H)

FEBRUARY

3 Mangotsfield United (A)
10 Didcot Town (H)
17 Bristol Manor Farm (A)
24 Barnstaple Town (H)

MARCH

3 Salisbury (A)
10 Taunton Town (H)
17 Slimbridge (H)
24 Evesham United (A)
31 Cirencester Town (H)

APRIL

2 AFC Totton (A)
7 Yate Town (H)
14 Swindon Supermarine (A)
21 North Leigh (H)
28 Bideford (A)

SALISBURY

SOUTHERN WEST

AUGUST

12 Mangotsfield (A) W 5-0
15 Paulton Rovers(H) D 2-2
26 North Leigh (A) L 1-2
28 AFC Totton (H) W 2-0

SEPTEMBER

9 Shortwood (A) W 8-0
23 Yate Town (A) W 1-0
26 Swindon Super (H) L 0-2
30 Bishops Cleeve (H) D 0-0

OCTOBER

14 Slimbridge (A)
21 Evesham United (H)
24 Winchester City (A)

NOVEMBER

4 Barnstaple Town (A)
11 Larkhall Athletic (H)
14 Kidlington (H)
18 Cinderford Town (A)
25 Bristol Manor Farm (H)
28 Didcot Town (A)

DECEMBER

2 Bideford (H)
9 Taunton Town (A)
16 Paulton Rovers (A)
23 Mangotsfield United (H)
26 AFC Totton (A)

JANUARY

1 Wimborne Town (H)
6 Cirencester Town (A)
13 North Leigh (H)
20 Larkhall Athletic (A)
27 Barnstaple Town (H)

FEBRUARY

3 Yate Town (H)
10 Swindon Supermarine (A)
17 Slimbridge (H)
24 Bishops Cleeve (A)

MARCH

3 Winchester City (H)
10 Evesham United (A)
17 Taunton Town (H)
24 Bideford (A)
31 Shortwood United (H)

APRIL

2 Wimborne Town (A)
7 Cinderford Town (H)
14 Kidlington (A)
21 Didcot Town (H)
28 Bristol Manor Farm (A)

WIMBORNE

SOUTHERN WEST

AUGUST

12 Bishops Cleeve(H) W 3-1
15 Didcot Town (A) L 2-4
26 Yate Town (H) W 4-2
28 Winchester City (A) L 0-1

SEPTEMBER

2 Larkhall Athletic (H) L 1-3
9 Bristol Manor Farm(H) L 1-3
17 Evesham United (A) W 2-1
23 Bideford (A) W 2-1
30 AFC Totton (H) D 1-1

OCTOBER

14 North Leigh (A)
21 Swindon Supermarine (H)
24 Paulton Rovers (A)

NOVEMBER

4 Shortwood United (H)
11 Cirencester Town (A)
14 Taunton Town (A)
18 Mangotsfield United (H)
25 Slimbridge (A)
28 AFC Totton (H)

DECEMBER

2 Barnstaple Town (A)
9 Kidlington (H)
16 Didcot Town (H)
23 Bishops Cleeve (A)
26 Winchester City (H)

JANUARY

1 Salisbury (A)
6 Evesham United (H)
13 Yate Town (A)
20 Cirencester Town (H)
27 Shortwood United (A)

FEBRUARY

3 Bideford (H)
10 Larkhall Athletic (A)
17 North Leigh (H)
24 Cinderford Town (A)

MARCH

3 Paulton Rovers (H)
10 Swindon Supermarine (A)
17 Kidlington (A)
24 Barnstaple Town (H)
31 Bristol Manor Farm (A)

APRIL

2 Salisbury (H)
7 Mangotsfield (A)
14 Taunton Town (H)
21 AFC Totton (A)
28 Slimbridge (H)

Dan Evans: Q and As

Dan Evans has been handed a one-year ban for his positive doping test.

The 27-year-old failed a test for cocaine at the Barcelona Open in April and will be eligible to compete again on April 24 next year.

Here, the Sports Pink answers the key questions surrounding the case.

Was a 12-month ban expected?

A year is more lenient than most people were expecting.

The International Tennis Federation accepted Evans bore "no significant fault or negligence" for the failed test, while he was also given credit for promptly admitting he had taken the drug.

If Evans admitted taking the drug, why was he not deemed at fault?

Cocaine is only a banned substance in competition. Evans admitted he took the drug prior to the Barcelona

Dan Evans

Open but denied taking it during the tournament. Evans' explanation, which was accepted by the ITF, was that he stored permitted medication in the same pocket of his washbag in which he had previously put the cocaine, leading to accidental ingestion.

What does this mean for his tennis career?

Evans has already said he is determined to come back and he is nearly halfway through his ban.

However, because the rankings are calculated on a yearly basis, when he returns he will be unranked, meaning he will have to start from the bottom.

The good news for Evans is he has already climbed quickly from lowly rankings before and knows what it takes. At 27, it is not unrealistic to think his best years could still be ahead of him.

PREMIER LEAGUE

Chelsea support fans' Christmas Eve worries

Chelsea will continue to support fans' concerns over the prospect of Premier League matches being switched to Christmas Eve for live television.

It is understood Sky is considering moving fixtures back a day from December 23 to fill its allocated Sunday afternoon slots.

The Premier League games selected for broadcast over the festive schedule are set to be confirmed on October 16.

Arsenal are set to host Liverpool on Saturday December 23, while Chelsea are currently scheduled to head to Everton. It has been suggested both games could be chosen for live coverage.

Before the international break, Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp called on Sky to seriously the consider the implications of scheduling a match on a date which he believes fans will have no appetite for.

''I really cannot imagine that anyone wants to watch football on that night,'' he said.

Arsenal are mindful of the issues hosting the match on Christmas Eve would present, both in terms of staffing at the Emirates Stadium, such as the guaranteed number of stewards needed for a match to be granted a safety certificate, as well as the obvious disruption for all the supporters.

Earlier this week, the Chelsea Supporters Trust, backed by fellow fans' groups across the Premier League clubs, made its feelings on the matter clear, saying "football on Christmas Eve is unacceptable and is a step too far."

On Friday afternoon, Chelsea posted a statement on the club's official website expressing sympathy for the objections, which have been taken up with the Premier League.

"The Chelsea Supporters Trust wrote to the club this week expressing its objections to fixtures being scheduled to be played on Christmas Eve, an idea they are opposed to 'due to the inherent travel difficulties and disruption to what is regarded as sacrosanct family time'," the Chelsea statement read.

"The club is sympathetic to our supporters' objections and it is a subject we have raised with the Premier League."

The statement was later taken down from Chelsea's official website.

Saints watched by a new EFL Trophy low

Simon **Carter**

SAINTS were watched by the lowest crowd of the Checkatrade Trophy season at Cambridge United in midweek.

Their EFL Trophy tie at the League 2 club attracted - if that is the word - just 480 fans to the Abbey Stadium on Tuesday night.

The next lowest on the night was Colchester's 684 for their 1-0 home loss to Gillingham.

That was an improvement, though, on the attendance for Colchester's previous home Trophy tie against Reading U21s. On that occasion, just 572 turned up.

So far, after two rounds of games, the average attendance is the competition is 1,494.

The biggest crowd of the tournament so far is the 3,962 who saw Plymouth's home game against Chelsea U21s at Home Pak.

Argyle also attracted 3,800 for Tuesday's Devon derby with Exeter.

Cambridge United v Saints didn't pull in the fans in midweek. Picture courtesy Southampton FC.

Checkatrade Trophy crowds 2017/18

First round of games

Plymouth v Chelsea U21 - 3,962
Rotherham v Man City U2 - 2,562
Cheltenham v Swansea U21 - 801
Luton v Tottenham U212,699
Notts County v Everton U21 - 1,409
Swindon v West Ham U21 - 2,082
Portsmouth v Fulham U21 - 1,520
Blackpool v Wigan - 1,532
Chesterfield v Bradford - 1,099
Colchester v Reading U21 - 572
Crewe v Newcastle U21 - 1,351
Forest Green v Newport - 1,090
Oldham v Port Vale - 1,429
Blackburn v Stoke U21 - 1,501
Coventry v Shrewsbury - 1,968
Crawley v Charlton - 1,666
Exeter City v Yeovil - 1,509
Fleetwood v Leicester U21 - 517
Gillingham v Southend - 1,549
Grimsby Town v Doncaster - 862
Manfield Town v Lincoln - 2,495
MK Dons v Brighton U21 - 1,541
Morecambe v Carlisle - 1,228
Northampton v Cambridge - 1,453
Peterborough v Saints U21 - 2,282
Scunthorpe v Sunderland U21 - 1,127
Stevenage v Oxford United - 799
Wycombe v Bristol Rovers - 1,132
Barnet v AFC Wimbledon - 696
Accrington v Middlesbrough U21 - 587
Bury v Rochdale - 1,451
Walsall v West Brom U21 - 1,055

2nd round of games

Cambridge v Saints U21 - 480
Rotherham v Chesterfield - 2,043
Accrington v Blackpool - 975
Crewe v Oldham - 976
Doncaster v Sunderland U21 - 1,520
AFC Wimbledon v Tottenham U21 - n/a
Blackburn Rovers v Bury - 2,025
Carlisle United v Leicester U21- 1,009
Cheltenham v Forest Green -1,576
Colchester v Gillingham - 684
Fleetwood v Morecambe - 768
Luton Town v Barnet - 1,530
MK Dons v Stevenage - 2,031
Oxford United v Brighton U21 - 1,074
Peterborough v Northampton - 2,745
Plymouth v Exeter City - 3,800
Port Vale v Newcastle U21 - 824
Portsmouth v Crawley - 1,527
Rochdale v Stoke City U21 - n/a
Scunthorpe v Grimsby - 1,987
Shrewsbury v West Brom U21 - 1,404
Southend v Reading U21 - 1,148
Walsall v Coventry - 1,517

PREMIER LEAGUE

England's (at times unconvincing) route to Russia

Harry Kane

England's 1-0 win over Slovenia at Wembley booked their place at next summer's World Cup.

Here, the Sports Pink charts their qualification.

September 4, 2016: Slovakia 0 England 1

Sam Allardyce's one and only game. Ex-Saint Adam Lallana scored in stoppage time to get the campaign off to a winning start.

October 8, 2016: England 2 Malta 0

Gareth Southgate was drafted in as caretaker and only wayward finishing stopped them adding to goals from Daniel Sturridge and Dele Alli.

October 11, 2016: Slovenia 0 England 0

Joe Hart's fine display helped England earn a point.

November 11, 2016: England 3 Scotland 0

A comfortable win. Sturridge, Lallana and Gary Cahill all finding the net.

March 26, 2017: England 2 Lithuania 0

In full-time charge, Southgate calls up Jermain Defoe and he scored at Wembley after carrying Bradley Lowery onto the pitch. Jamie Vardy added a second.

June 10, 2017: Scotland 2 England 2

Harry Kane's stoppage-time goal at Hampden earns England a face-saving draw. Leading through Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain, they fell behind to two brilliant Leigh Griffiths free-kicks.

September 1, 2017: Malta 0 England 4

Kane's August drought was ended with an England goal in a team performance which failed to convince. Saints right back Ryan Bertrand, Danny Welbeck and Kane added late gloss.

September 4, 2017: England 2 Slovakia 1

The most important result. England fell behind but goals from Eric Dier and Marcus Rashford got the win.

October 5, 2017: England 1 Slovenia 0

Captain Kane came to the rescue with the winning goal in the third minute of injury time as Southgate's men got the job done in far from commanding fashion.

Van Dijk 'failure' hangs over Klopp

Carl **Markham**

Sunday sees Jurgen Klopp mark his two-year anniversary as Liverpool manager, having replaced Brendan Rodgers on October 8, 2015.

Here, the Sports Pink takes a look at the German's first 24 months in charge.

SQUAD

Klopp has opted for evolution rather than revolution, reflected in the fact 15 of the players he has used this season were inherited from Rodgers (not including Nathaniel Clyne and Adam Lallana, who have been injured). Three of those - Dejan Lovren, Alberto Moreno and Clyne (when fit) would make up his first-choice defence. He has more depth among his goalkeepers than before and has considerably improved the forward line. The departments in between still require some work, however.

SIGNINGS

Ten major signings have been made during Klopp's tenure: of those ex-Saint Sadio Mane has been the one stand-out success. Summer signing Mohamed Salah has shown early signs he could follow suit but fellow new arrivals Andrew Robertson, Dominic Solanke and Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain have not really had chance to stake their claims. Last season's signings midfielder Georginio Wijnaldum and defender Joel Matip have been inconsistent. It is the signing Klopp could not get done - that of Saints centre-back Virgil van Dijk - which has been the most talked about.

Jurgen Klopp

DEVELOPMENT

Klopp has blooded a number of youngsters from the club's academy. Some of it was more out of necessity rather than design as two busy Januarys meant he had to dip into the reserves for cup competitions. It was not without merit, however, as it gave chances to the likes of Ben Woodburn - who became the club's youngest scorer with a goal in the League Cup and has gone on to become a senior Wales international aged just 17 - Sheyi Ojo, Ovie Ejaria and Trent Alexander-Arnold. The latter is currently enjoying an extended run in the first team to cover Clyne's injury.

STYLE

The high-tempo, aggressive pressing and pacy counter-attacks synonymous with Klopp took a while to implement, but the tactics were at their most effective 12 months ago when Liverpool blitzed teams on their way to briefly topping the Premier League last November. However, opponents began to work them out in the second half of the campaign, sitting deep to make things difficult, and it posed some testing questions.

KEY MOMENTS

Four months after taking over Klopp guided the team to the League Cup final where they were unlucky to lose on penalties to Manchester City. A thrilling 4-3 home Europa League win over Klopp's former club Borussia Dortmund felt like a watershed but despite reaching the final and leading at half-time, a second-half collapse saw them lose 3-1 to Sevilla. Guiding Liverpool to the top of the Premier League table in early November 2016 was followed by a struggle from January, a month which included a 2-0 aggregate semi-final defeat to Saints which prevented Klopp reaching back-to-back League Cup finals. Qualifying for the Champions League for only the second time in eight years saw them achieve their target, even if they did limp over the line. Keeping Philippe Coutinho out of the hands of Barcelona, and his successful reintegration into the team, was significant - as was the failure to persuade Saints to part with Van Dijk.

Book review

Over and Out
My Innings of a Lifetime with Test Match Special
By Henry Blofeld

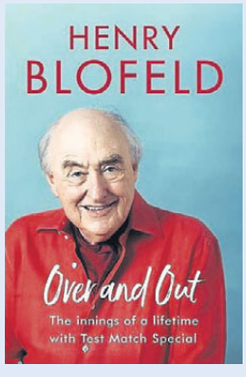
Sportsbookofthemonth.com price: £13.60, saving £5.39 on rrp

Such is the delicious, cut glass tone of Henry 'Blowers' Blofeld's rich voice that thousands of cricket fans, grown used to his match commentary on Test Match Special (TMS), are likely to buy Over and Out and read it as though still listening to him on the radio.

Blowers' mastery of scene description, particularly the small details that glue the spoken picture together (think red London buses, fussy grey pigeons etc), have not deserted him in his latest venture into print.

Having published two memoirs, the second as recently as 2014, prospective readers may wonder whether Over and Out is a regurgitated version of the two. Fortunately, it isn't. Blowers wouldn't short-change his public.

Henry Calthorpe Blofeld OBE, a product of Eton and Cambridge and originally nicknamed 'Blowers' by the late Brian Johnston, has entertained TMS listeners with his vivid descriptions for more than fifty years. However, instead of concentrating upon his own



career, (he could have been a first class cricketer but for an altercation with a bus that left him in a coma) in Over and Out he turns his attention to his commentary box co-stars including Brian Johnson, John Arlott and Jonathan 'Aggers' Agnew, gleefully recounting anecdotes that have, no doubt, been aired over a glass or two and much laughter.

Yet such a formula can rapidly become tiresome and Blowers, an accomplished print journalist, is clearly mindful of this as he builds upon an often hilarious TMS foundation to introduce details of interviews with cricket-loving stars of stage and screen (there's no point calling them celebrities because these people are talented) and tales of his experiences while travelling.

Blowers is no one-trick pony. Reading his travel-related passages, you imagine he would have been the perfect successor to Alan Whicker: an entertaining, globe-trotting bon viveur broadcasting his patrician tones into our living rooms. In many respects, you could argue that via TMS this is exactly what he's done, which is why so many cricket fans mourn his departure and why all of them will enjoy this book.

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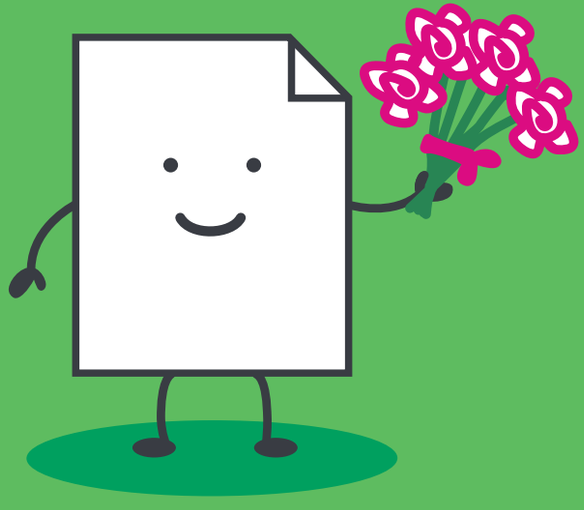

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PINK RESULTS

SATURDAY'S FOOTBALL RESULTS AND TABLES

Premier League

		HOME					AWAY					
	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Man City	7	2	1	0	11	1	4	0	0	11	1	19
Man Utd	7	4	0	0	14	0	2	1	0	7	2	19
Tottenham	7	0	2	1	2	3	4	0	0	12	2	14
Chelsea	7	1	1	2	4	4	3	0	0	8	2	13
Arsenal	7	4	0	0	11	3	0	1	2	0	5	13
Burnley	7	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	0	6	4	12
Liverpool	7	2	1	0	6	1	1	2	1	7	11	12
Watford	7	0	2	1	3	9	3	1	0	8	3	12
Newcastle	7	2	1	1	6	4	1	0	2	1	2	10
W.B.A.	7	1	3	0	4	3	1	0	2	2	5	9
Huddersfld	7	1	2	1	2	5	1	1	1	3	2	9
SAINTS	**7**	**1**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**5**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**2**	**2**	**8**
Stoke	7	2	1	1	5	7	0	1	2	2	4	8
Brighton	7	2	0	1	4	3	0	1	3	1	6	7
West Ham	7	2	0	1	5	3	0	1	3	2	10	7
Everton	7	2	0	2	3	5	0	1	2	1	7	7
Leicester	7	1	0	2	5	5	0	2	2	4	7	5
Swansea	7	0	0	3	1	7	1	2	1	2	1	5
Bournemouth	7	1	1	2	3	5	0	0	3	1	6	4
Crystal P	7	0	0	3	0	6	0	0	4	0	11	0

SkyBet Championship

		HOME					AWAY					
	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Cardiff	11	4	2	0	11	3	3	1	1	6	6	24
Wolves	11	3	1	1	8	6	4	1	1	11	5	23
Sheff Utd	11	4	0	1	7	2	3	0	3	8	8	21
Bristol C	11	3	2	0	10	3	2	3	1	10	8	20
Leeds Utd	11	3	2	0	10	2	3	0	3	8	9	20
Preston	11	3	3	0	8	3	2	2	1	5	3	20
A. Villa	11	3	3	0	8	4	2	1	2	9	6	19
Ipswich	10	4	0	2	11	7	2	0	2	9	9	18
Norwich	11	2	2	1	4	3	3	1	2	7	10	18
Fulham	11	1	3	1	5	5	3	2	1	9	5	17
Middlesbro	11	3	2	1	8	5	1	2	2	5	4	16
Sheff Wed	11	3	2	1	12	8	1	2	2	3	4	16
Nottm For	11	3	0	3	7	9	2	0	3	8	10	15
Millwall	11	3	1	2	12	9	0	3	2	2	4	13
Derby Cty	10	2	1	1	7	3	1	3	2	6	10	13
Q.P.R.	11	3	2	1	9	6	0	2	3	5	9	13
Hull	11	3	1	2	18	8	0	2	3	4	11	12
Barnsley	10	2	1	2	7	7	1	1	3	6	8	11
Brentford	11	0	4	1	7	8	1	2	3	6	7	9
Reading	10	1	2	2	5	6	1	1	3	4	6	9
Burton Albion	11	2	1	3	5	12	0	2	3	1	11	9
Birminghm	11	2	1	2	4	6	0	1	5	3	13	8
Sunderlnd	11	0	1	4	3	8	1	3	2	9	13	7
Bolton	11	0	0	5	3	12	0	2	4	1	10	2

SkyBet League One

Blackpool P **Blackburn** P
Postponed.

Charlton P **Peterboro** P
Postponed.

Doncaster 4 **Southend** 1
Marquis 45, Whiteman 47,50,57 pen — Wordsworth 38
HT 1-1 Att 7,369

M K Dons 1 **Bradford** 4
Ebanks-Landell 45 — Vincelot 11, Wyke 18,71, Taylor 82
HT 1-2 Att 9,106

Northmptn 0 **Bristol R** 6
Bodin 38, Harrison 56,61, Gaffney 72, Sercombe 76, Telford 86
HT 0-1 Att 6,087

Oldham P **Bury** P
Postponed.

Oxford Utd 3 **AFC Wimbledon** 0
Thomas 12, Ricardinho 48, Fernandez Codina 85
HT 1-0 Att 7,241

Plymouth 1 **Fleetwood Town** 2
Fletcher 90 — Hiwula 64, Bell 90
HT 0-0 Att 8,064

Rochdale 0 **Rotherham** 1
Wood 57
HT 0-0 Att 4,113

Scunthorpe 1 **Wigan** 2
Ojo 90 — Burn 51, Powell 74
HT 0-0 Att 4,480

Walsall 1 **Shrewsbry** 1
Agyei 13 — Payne 20 pen
HT 1-1 Att 5,971

		HOME					AWAY					
	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Shrewsbry	12	5	1	0	9	3	4	2	0	9	5	30
Wigan	12	5	1	0	12	2	4	0	2	10	5	28
Bradford	12	4	0	2	8	6	4	2	0	14	7	26
Rotherham	12	5	0	1	19	6	2	0	4	3	7	21
Peterboro	11	4	0	2	11	11	2	2	1	11	6	20
Charlton	11	3	1	1	8	6	3	1	2	11	9	20
Blackburn	10	3	0	2	8	5	3	1	1	7	3	19
Scunthorpe	12	2	2	2	5	4	3	2	1	7	3	19
Fleetwood Tn	11	3	1	2	12	11	3	0	2	8	8	19
Oxford Utd	12	3	2	1	13	5	2	1	3	8	9	18
Blackpool	11	4	1	0	7	2	1	2	3	9	11	18
Bristol R	12	4	0	2	13	11	2	0	4	10	12	18
M K Dons	12	2	2	2	6	8	3	0	3	6	7	17
Southend	12	3	3	0	8	5	1	1	4	9	17	16
POMPEY	**11**	**3**	**1**	**2**	**11**	**5**	**1**	**1**	**3**	**4**	**9**	**14**
Walsall	12	2	4	0	11	9	1	1	4	5	12	14
Doncaster	12	1	3	2	8	7	2	0	4	7	8	12
Rochdale	12	2	2	2	6	6	0	3	3	4	8	11
Oldham	11	1	0	4	7	12	2	1	3	10	14	10
Bury	11	2	1	3	6	6	0	2	3	6	11	9
Wimbledon	12	1	2	3	3	6	1	1	4	2	8	9
Northmptn	12	2	0	4	5	13	0	2	4	3	9	8
Gillingham	11	1	2	2	5	6	0	2	4	1	9	7
Plymouth	12	1	0	5	4	13	0	2	4	4	8	5

SkyBet League Two

Acc Stanley 0 **Luton** 2
Collins 22, Hylton 44 pen
HT 0-2 Att 2,193

Barnet 0 **Coventry** 0
HT 0-0 Att 4,041

Cambridge 1 **Wycombe** 3
Elito 70 pen — Eze 48,57, Umerah 89
HT 0-0 Att 5,365

Carlisle 0 **Exeter** 1
Sweeney 49
HT 0-0 Att 4,677

Cheltnham 2 **Swindon** 1
Graham 20, Wright 90 — Preston 53
HT 1-0 Att 5,050

Colchester 2 **Mansfield** 0
Murray 29, Mandron 34
HT 2-0 Att 3,262

Crewe 1 **Stevenage** 0
Bowery 90
HT 0-0 Att 3,679

Lincoln City 2 **Chesterfld** 1
Bostwick 17, Kellett 25 og — Dennis 82 pen
HT 2-0 Att 9,485

Morecambe 0 **Crawley** 1
Clifford 18
HT 0-1 Att 1,222

Newport County 2 **Yeovil** 0
Amond 45, Labadie 55
HT 1-0 Att 3,689

Notts Cnty 1 **Forest Grn** 1
Milsom 90 — Bugiel 30
HT 0-1 Att 13,267

Port Vale 1 **Grimsby** 2
Pope 39 — Jones 51, Dembele 67
HT 1-0 Att 5,849

		HOME					AWAY					
	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Exeter	12	5	0	1	10	4	4	1	1	11	8	28
Notts Cnty	12	4	2	0	12	4	4	0	2	10	8	26
Luton	12	5	0	1	17	6	2	3	1	6	4	24
Wycombe	12	3	1	2	14	12	4	2	0	11	6	24
Coventry	12	5	0	1	9	1	2	2	2	5	5	23
Acc Stanley	12	3	1	2	10	8	4	1	1	11	8	23
Stevenage	12	3	2	1	12	8	3	1	2	7	5	21
Newport Co	12	4	1	0	8	1	2	2	3	9	11	21
Mansfield	12	4	2	0	13	5	1	2	3	5	10	19
Lincoln City	12	3	2	1	9	5	2	2	2	6	8	19
Swindon	12	2	1	3	8	12	4	0	2	9	4	19
Cheltnham	12	4	0	2	12	7	1	2	3	4	7	17
Grimsby	12	2	2	2	7	8	3	0	3	9	11	17
Cambridge	12	3	1	2	8	6	2	0	4	4	8	16
Colchester	12	3	2	1	13	6	1	1	4	5	12	15
Carlisle	12	1	2	3	6	7	3	0	3	9	10	14
Crewe	12	3	2	2	10	10	1	0	4	3	8	14
Crawley	12	1	0	5	4	8	3	1	2	8	6	13
Barnet	12	2	1	3	6	6	1	2	3	9	10	12
Yeovil	12	2	3	1	8	6	1	0	5	9	20	12
Morecambe	12	2	1	3	5	7	0	3	3	5	11	10
Forest Grn	12	1	1	4	7	12	0	2	4	4	15	6
Port Vale	12	0	1	5	5	10	1	1	4	4	9	5
Chesterfld	12	1	1	4	6	10	0	1	5	4	15	5

Ladbrokes Scottish Prem

		HOME					AWAY					
	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Celtic	8	2	2	0	11	4	4	0	0	9	1	20
Aberdeen	8	3	1	0	8	2	3	1	0	7	4	20
Rangers	8	1	1	2	6	6	3	1	0	11	5	14
St Johnstn	8	3	1	0	8	3	1	1	2	5	8	14
Motherwell	8	4	0	2	10	4	0	1	1	3	6	13
Hibernian	8	1	1	1	6	6	2	3	0	8	6	13
Hearts	8	0	1	0	0	0	2	2	3	7	10	9
Dundee	8	2	1	1	7	6	0	1	3	3	10	8
Hamilton	8	1	0	3	6	10	1	1	2	6	7	7
Ross Cnty	8	0	1	3	3	7	2	0	2	4	7	7
Partick	8	0	2	2	6	8	0	1	3	2	8	3
Kilmarnock	8	0	2	4	4	10	0	1	1	1	3	3

Ladbrokes Scottish Ch'ship

		HOME					AWAY					
	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
St Mirren	8	5	0	0	15	5	1	0	2	4	8	18
Dundee Utd	8	3	1	0	6	3	2	1	1	4	4	17
Dunfrmline	8	3	0	1	12	5	2	1	1	10	4	16
Livingston	8	1	2	1	6	7	3	1	0	8	3	15
Queen Sth	8	2	0	1	6	3	1	2	2	8	8	11
Morton	8	2	0	2	7	5	1	2	1	4	4	11
Dumbarton	8	2	1	1	4	6	0	2	2	3	5	9
Falkirk	8	0	2	2	2	7	1	1	2	4	7	6
Inverness CT	8	0	2	2	2	5	1	0	3	8	11	5
Brechin	8	0	2	2	3	10	0	0	4	3	9	2

Ladbrokes Scottish Lge 1

		HOME					AWAY					
	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Raith	8	4	0	0	10	2	2	1	1	12	3	19
Ayr Utd	8	2	1	1	10	5	3	0	1	12	6	16
Albion R	8	1	0	3	4	12	4	0	0	16	5	15
Arbroath	8	1	1	2	6	8	3	1	0	14	4	14
East Fife	8	2	0	2	4	6	2	0	2	4	6	12
Stranraer	8	2	0	2	9	11	1	2	1	7	6	11
Airdrieonians	8	2	1	1	7	4	1	0	3	4	8	10
Alloa	8	2	1	1	6	7	0	2	2	4	7	9
Queen Park	8	0	1	3	4	14	1	0	3	3	7	4
Forfar	8	1	1	2	3	9	0	0	4	2	11	4

Ladbrokes Scottish Lge 2

		HOME					AWAY					
	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Stirling A	8	3	1	1	13	7	3	0	0	10	5	19
Stenhsmuir	8	4	0	1	12	4	0	3	0	3	3	15
Montrose	8	2	1	1	6	6	2	1	1	5	5	14
Peterhead	8	1	1	2	6	7	3	0	1	10	4	13
Berwick	8	2	0	1	7	8	2	0	3	3	8	12
Elgin	8	2	1	1	7	4	1	1	2	7	8	11
Annan Ath	8	1	1	2	3	4	2	0	2	9	6	10
Clyde	8	1	2	1	6	6	1	0	3	8	11	8
Edinburgh	8	1	0	3	2	9	1	0	3	3	8	6
Cowdenbth	8	1	0	2	1	5	0	2	3	2	5	5

Vanarama National League

Barrow 2 **Leyton O** 2
Gomis 23, White 41 — Mooney 19, Clay 27
HT 2-2

Boreham W 1 **FC Halifax** 1
Andrade 7 — Morgan 81
HT 1-0 Att 562

Gateshead 1 **Bromley** 2
Johnson 68 — Dennis 84, Williams 90
HT 0-0 Att 853

Macclesfld 1 **Ebbsfleet United** 0
Hancox 42
HT 1-0 Att 1,635

Maidenhead Utd 3 **Aldershot** 3
Clifton 18, Inman 63, Pritchard 86 pen — Kellermann 16,90, McDonnell 42
HT 1-2 Att 2,425

Maidstone Utd 1 **Guiseley** 1
Hines 12 — Mulhern 90 pen
HT 1-0 Att 2,552

Solihull Moors 1 **Hartlepool** 2
Carter 86 pen — Oates 47, Franks 90
HT 0-0 Att 2,658

Sutton Utd 2 **AFC Fylde** 1
Dundas 41, Grand 42 og — Grand 85
HT 2-0 Att 2,127

Torquay 0 **Dover** 2
Lewis 5, Bird 63
HT 0-1 Att 1,915

Tranmere 0 **Chester FC** 0
HT 0-0 Att 7,172

Woking 1 **Dagenham** 0
Charles-Cook 78
HT 0-0

Wrexham L **EASTLEIGH** L
HT L-L

		HOME					AWAY					
	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Macclesfld	15	4	2	2	9	9	5	0	2	8	6	29
Dover	15	3	2	2	9	5	5	2	1	11	5	28
Woking	15	6	1	1	14	7	3	0	4	9	12	28
Sutton Utd	15	4	2	2	13	12	4	1	2	8	7	27
Dagenham	15	5	1	1	18	9	1	5	2	9	10	24
Bromley	15	4	1	2	12	4	3	2	3	10	13	24
Aldershot	15	3	2	2	14	9	3	3	2	10	8	23
Wrexham	14	3	3	1	6	3	3	2	2	5	4	23
Maidstone	15	2	5	1	10	9	4	0	3	10	9	23
FC Halifax	15	4	1	2	10	8	2	4	2	6	6	23
Boreham W	15	4	1	3	11	7	2	3	2	12	11	22
Maidenhead	15	4	2	2	13	10	2	2	3	10	12	22
Hartlepool	15	3	1	3	7	7	3	3	2	8	8	22
Ebbsfleet	15	2	4	1	9	7	2	5	1	12	10	21
Tranmere	15	3	2	3	8	7	2	3	2	3	3	20
Gateshead	15	4	2	2	12	6	0	4	3	5	9	18
Leyton O	15	3	1	3	12	10	2	2	4	9	16	18
EASTLEIGH	**13**	**2**	**3**	**1**	**7**	**5**	**1**	**4**	**2**	**6**	**7**	**16**
AFC Fylde	15	1	4	2	9	12	2	3	3	13	13	16
Barrow	15	2	5	1	9	6	0	2	5	7	12	13
Chester FC	14	1	3	3	6	9	1	3	3	6	12	12
Guiseley	15	1	4	2	7	8	0	3	5	3	18	10
Solihull	15	1	2	5	9	14	1	0	6	5	13	8
Torquay	15	1	3	4	8	10	0	1	6	7	18	7

Vanarama National Lge Sth

Chelmsford 5 **Eastbourne Borough** 2
Church 55,56, Spillane 81, Oyenuga 84, Dickson 90 — Taylor 18, Dawes 45
HT 0-2 Att 785

Concord Rgs 1 **Havant and W** 1
Cawley 8 — Prior 17
HT 1-1

Dartford 3 **Bognor Regis Town** 1
Pavey 7, Bradbrook 52 pen, Pugh 65 — Campbell 17
HT 1-1 Att 1,126

Gloucester 1 **Braintree Town** 3
Chambers 18 — Roberts 47,51, Oliyide 60
HT 1-0 Att 324

H Hempstead 1 **Weston-S-Mare** 1
Amaluzor 30 — Grubb 22
HT 1-1 Att 455

Hungerford Town 2 **East Thurrock** 2
Bignall 15, Herring 49 — Higgins 32 pen, Cornhill 64
HT 1-1 Att 221

Oxford C 2 **Poole Town** 3
Paterson 20,90 — Bentley 43,68, Bedford 78
HT 1-1

St Albans 2 **Bath City** 0
Murrell-Williamson 45, Walker 60
HT 1-0 Att 1,510

Truro City 1 **Hampton & Richmond** 1
Riley-Lowe 78 pen — Cook 61
HT 0-0 Att 531

Wealdstone 2 **Whitehawk** 1
Green 63 pen, Eisa 88 — Marsh-Brown 28
HT 0-1 Att 993

Welling U 4 **Chippenham** 0
Healy 38, Bradbrook 42,48, Goldberg 83
HT 2-0

		HOME					AWAY					
	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
St Albans	13	5	1	1	15	9	3	2	1	8	5	27
Braintree Tn	13	4	2	0	13	4	4	1	2	16	19	27
Truro City	13	4	1	2	15	9	4	1	1	11	7	26
Dartford	13	5	1	1	19	5	2	3	1	11	7	25
Chelmsford	13	3	2	2	11	7	4	2	0	8	2	25
East Thurrock	13	2	3	1	11	8	4	3	0	16	12	24
Havant and W	13	2	1	3	11	9	4	2	1	9	4	21
Welling U	13	4	1	2	13	7	1	4	1	8	8	20
H Hemps'	13	4	1	2	13	10	2	1	3	8	10	20
Bath City	13	2	2	2	7	9	4	0	3	10	10	20
Eastbourne	13	3	2	1	12	7	2	2	3	11	15	19
Wealdstone	13	4	1	2	12	7	0	4	2	6	11	17
Chippenham	13	3	2	1	12	6	1	1	5	9	18	15
Hungerford	13	2	2	3	11	11	2	1	3	6	12	15
Gloucester	13	2	2	3	7	11	2	1	3	9	12	15
Weston-S-Mare	13	3	1	2	14	10	0	4	3	8	13	14
Hamp & Rich	13	1	4	1	6	6	1	4	2	7	8	14
Poole Town	13	0	2	4	7	12	3	1	3	9	12	12
Bognor Regis	13	2	2	2	13	10	0	3	4	7	16	11
Oxford C	13	1	3	3	14	15	1	0	5	7	15	9
Concord Rgs	13	2	2	3	5	7	0	1	5	4	12	9
Whitehawk	13	0	3	3	6	17	0	0	7	5	24	3

Vanarama National Lge Nth

AFC Telford 2 **Boston** 1
Sutton 29, Dwyer 45 — Sutton 40 og
HT 2-1 Att 1,097

Alfreton Town 0 **Chorley** 2
Haughton 12,85
HT 0-1 Att 620

Blyth Spartans 6 **Nuneaton** 3
Maguire 37,41, Hopson 39 pen,68,82 pen, McTiernan 69 — Chambers 19,85, Heaton 52
HT 3-1

Bradford Pk Ave 1 **Kiddrmnstr** 1
Nowakowski 37 — Sonupe 45
HT 1-1 Att 397

Curzon Ashton 1 **Harrogate Town** 2
Rowney 25 — Leesley 10, Curry 87
HT 1-1 Att 508

Darlington 1 **Stockport County** 1
Galbraith 47 — Oswell 90
HT 0-0 Att 1,758

N Ferriby 3 **FC Utd of Man** 3
Muskwe 43,85, Brogan 54 — Walker 42, Greaves 62, Irwin 73
HT 1-1

Salford City 2 **Leamington** 3
Phenix 29,65 — Thompson-Brown 19 pen, Gudger 45, Revan 86
HT 1-2

Southport 1 **Spennymoor Town** 2
Sampson 88 — Foley 39, Taylor 90
HT 0-1 Att 838

Tamworth 1 **Gainsboro** 2
Styche 41 — Jarman 46, Stainfield 83
HT 1-0 Att 762

York 2 **Brackley** 1
Parkin 20,86 — Williams 70
HT 1-0 Att 2,732

		HOME					AWAY					
	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Harrogate	13	4	1	1	15	4	6	1	0	22	9	32
Salford City	13	5	0	2	14	7	4	2	0	8	3	29
Blyth	13	4	0	3	17	12	4	0	2	17	12	24
Spennymoor	13	3	2	1	10	7	4	1	2	16	9	24
Brackley	13	4	2	0	9	3	2	3	2	11	7	23
York	13	3	2	2	9	8	3	1	2	12	7	21
Chorley	13	3	2	1	10	5	3	1	3	6	8	21
Tamworth	13	5	0	2	15	8	1	2	3	5	14	20
Bradford Pk A	13	2	3	2	8	10	3	1	2	9	6	19
Stockport	13	4	2	0	16	3	1	1	5	8	14	18
Darlington	14	3	3	1	13	7	1	3	3	5	9	18
Kiddrmnstr	13	3	2	1	12	9	2	1	4	7	10	18
AFC Telford	13	2	0	5	10	20	4	0	2	9	4	18
Alfreton	13	4	1	2	12	5	1	1	4	9	15	17
Curzon Ash	14	4	2	2	10	7	0	3	3	6	16	17
Southport	13	2	2	3	12	13	3	0	3	5	12	17
Leamington	13	1	0	5	7	13	3	2	2	8	13	14
Boston	13	3	2	1	9	7	0	1	6	7	18	12
Nuneaton	13	3	1	2	10	5	0	2	5	8	23	12
FC Utd of Man	13	2	0	4	10	12	1	2	4	9	15	11
Gainsboro	13	1	0	5	9	15	2	2	3	9	13	11
N Ferriby	13	0	3	4	4	19	1	0	5	3	13	6

Evo-Stik South Premier Division

BASINGSTKE L **Banbury** L
Argent 4,90, Artwell 81 — Winters 45
HT 1-1

Chesham L **Royston Town** L
Frendo 52, Marriott 64
HT 0-0

Dunstable L **Farnboro** L
Osei-Bonsu 71
HT 0-0

Frome Town L **St Neots Town** L
Knights 42, Raynes 53 — Williams 59 pen, Sembie-Ferris 78
HT 1-0

Gosport Borough L **B Stortfrd** L
HT 0-2

Hereford FC L **Dorchester** L
Smith 52, Mills 62 pen,73, Reffell 64 — Oates 10 og
HT 0-1

Hitchin 4 **Stratford T** 0
Donnelly 18,33, Vincent 78, Charles 87
HT 2-0

Kettering L **Merthyr Town** L
HT 2-0

Kings Langley L **Redditch** L
HT 1-0

Slough 2 **Biggleswade Town** 1
Harris 41, Wadkins 80 — Hill 24
HT 1-1

St Ives Town L **Tiverton** L
Seymour-Shove 27 — Howe 45,90
HT 1-1

Weymouth L **Kings Lynn Town** L
Goodship 28,75 — Gash 67
HT 1-0

Bostik Premier Division

Billericay L **Hendon** L
Modeste 12, Cunnington 20,45, Bricknell 35 pen — Nathaniel-George 3, Cole 17
HT 4-2

Burgess Hill Town L **Lowestoft Town** L
Nyadzayo 14
HT 0-2

Dulwich L **Needham Market** L
Ferguson 32, Boakye-Yiadom 44
HT 2-0

Enfield Town L **Margate** L
Parcell 1
HT 1-0 Att 509

Harrow L **Kingstnian** L
Stanislaus 33 pen,35
HT 2-0

Leatherh'd L **Harlow** L
Midson 42 — Neite 32
HT 1-1

Leiston L **Staines Town** L
Jefford 14 — Buchanan 9
HT 1-1

Merstham L **Dorking Wanderers** L
Hall 22
HT 1-0

Met Police L **Folkestone Invicta** L
Gasson 14 — Draycott 4
HT 1-1

Thurrock L **Brightlingsea Regent** L
Oli 28 — Hogan 18
HT 1-1

Tonbridge Angels L **Wingate & Finchley** L
HT 0-0

Tooting & Mitcham L **Worthing** L
O'Neill 15 — Rance 28, Parsons 32
HT 1-2

POOLS CHECK

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	1	1	1	L	1	1	2	1	1	1

26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49
1	3●	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3●	1	3●	3●	1	1	3●	3●	1	1	2	L

NON LEAGUE FOOTBALL

Saturday, 7 October
FA TROPHY – Preliminary round
AFC Rushden & Diamonds 1 Kidsgrove Athletic 3
AFC Sudbury 2 Aylesbury Utd 2
Ashford Town (Middx) 4 Uxbridge 1
Aylesbury 4 Molesey 3
Bishops Cleeve 0 Larkhall Athletic 1
Bristol Manor Farm 4 Cinderford Town 1
Corinthian Casuals 2 AFC Dunstable 0
Egham Town 7 Shoreham 1
Fleet Town 1 Yate Town 1
Greenwich Borough 0 Hanwell Town 1
Hayes & Yeading Utd 3 Barton Rovers 1
Kempston Rovers 0 Hythe Town 1
Kidlington 3 Winchester City 1
Mangotsfield Utd 0 Thame Utd 1
Marlow 0 Aveley 0
Moneyfields 4 Bideford 2
North Leigh 1 Wimborne Town 3
Northwood 2 Maldon & Tiptree 5
Phoenix Sports 0 Chalfont St Peter 3
Salisbury 2 Paulton Rovers 3
Shortwood Utd 1 Didcot Town 0
Slimbridge 0 Hartley Wintney 1
Swindon Supermarine 1 Barnstaple Town 0
Taunton Town 1 AFC Totton 1
VCD Athletic 0 Bedford Town 1

EVO-STIK SOUTHERN LEAGUE
Premier Division:
Basingstoke Town 3 Banbury 1
Chesham Utd 1 Royston 2
Dunstable 1 Farnborough 0
Frome 2 St Neots 2
Gosport Borough 1 Bishops Stortford 3
Hereford 4 Dorchester Town 1
Hitchin 4 Stratford 0
Kettering 5 Merthyr Town 0
Kings Langley 1 Redditch Utd 2
Slough 2 Biggleswade 1
St Ives 1 Tiverton 2
Weymouth 3 Kings Lynn 1

SYDENHAMS WESSEX LEAGUE
Premier Division:
Andover Town 3 AFC Portchester 2
Baffins MR 3 Amesbury 3
Bashley 3 Newport IoW 1
Bemerton HH 2 Alresford 2
Bournemouth Poppies 0 Sholing 2
Cowes Sports 4 Shaftesbury 1
Fareham Town 3 Brockenhurst 2
Horndean 6 Hamworthy Utd 0
Lymington Town 2 Blackfield & Langley 1
Petersfield Town 1 Portland Utd 3
Division One:
Alton 4 AFC Stoneham 1
Christchurch 2 Tadley Calleva 0
East Cowes Vics 1 Downton 4
Hythe & Dibden 0 Whitchurch 2
New Milton 1 Andover NS 0
Ringwood 4 Folland Sports 2
Totton & Eling 1 Fawley 4
US Portsmouth 3 Romsey 3
Verwood 4 Laverstock & Ford 0

NEW FOREST CARE HAMPSHIRE PREMIER
Premier Division:
Colden Common 1 Liphook 4
Overton 3 Fleetlands 0
Division One:
Michelmersh 0 South Wonston Swifts 8
Combination Division:
Clanfield 3 QK Southampton 1
Fleetlands 0 Bush Hill 4
Liphook 1 Paulsgrove 2

HAMPSHIRE INTERMEDIATE CUP, first round:
AFC Burton 3 Liss Athletic 4
AFC Petersfield 2 Wey Valley 1
AFC Stoneham Res 0 Locks Heath 3
Binstead Res 10 Bosham Res 1
Bournemouth Sports 11 Hedge End Rangers 1
Braishfield 2 Upham 4
Brockenhurst Res 0 Bournemouth Electric 3
BTC Southampton 4 Alton 0
Bush Hill H-W East Cowes Vics Res
Compton 2 Four Marks 0
Durley 1 Christchurch Res 3
Hayling Utd 5 New Milton Town 0
Liss Athletic Res 1 Sandown Res 4
Lyndhurst 1 Brading Town 1 (Brading won 4-3 on pens)
Montefiore Halls H-W Petersfield Res
Netley Central Sports 8 Team Solent Res 1
Northwood St John 4 AFC Gulf Western 0
Nursling 2 Lymington Town Res 0
Paulsgrove 9 Wymering 1
Priory Rovers 0 Chamberlayne AFC 5
QK Southampton 3 Hedge End Town 0
Stockbridge 3 Headley Utd 0
Sway 8 Ringwood Town Res 0
Upham Res 1 Infinity 4
Ventnor A-W Heading Utd Res
Warsash Wasps 1 Clanfield 5
West Wight Res 0 Alresford Town Res 1
Whitecroft & Barton 9 AFC Portchester Res 2
Winchester Castle H-W Yatley Utd A

WYVERN COMBINATION LEAGUE
East Division:
Newport IoW 0 Hamble Club 5
Sholing 1 Alton 0
Tadley Calleva 3 Gosport Borough 5
West Division:
Laverstock & Ford 4 Verwood Town 2
Romsey Town 2 Bemerton HH 0

DREW SMITH SOUTHAMPTON LEAGUE PREMIER
Comrades Sports 0 Bishops Waltham Dyn 1
SENIOR 1
Alderbury 6 Comrades Sports Res 1

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